"WHEN BULLETS FLEW," A GREAT WAR STORY, BEGINS NEXT WEEK.

THE CHICAGO LEDGER

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A BLUE RIDGE FEUD;

OR, A MOUNTAIN GIRL'S LOVE.

BY FRANK T. MANN, AUTHOR OF "THE WITCH OF CAVILHAO," "A BALKED REVENGE," ETC.

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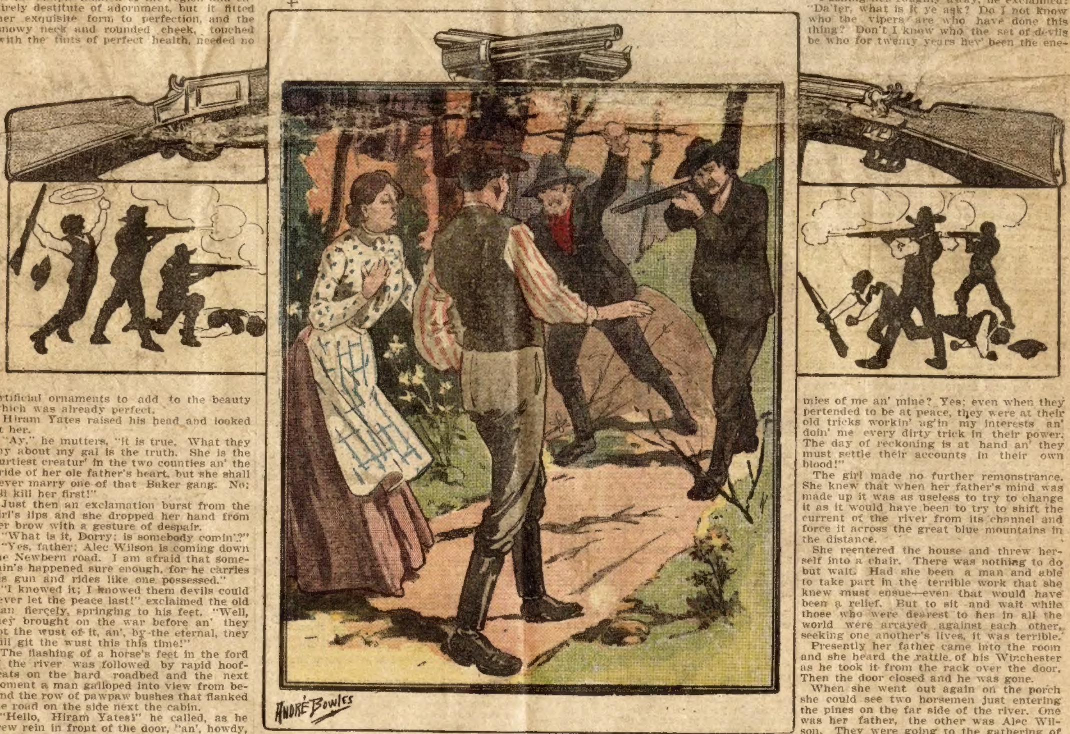
CHAPTER I.

THE STORM BURSTS.

Beyond the river and over the low spur of the Blue Ridge that ran parallel to it on the other side, the Newbern road was plainly visible from the Yates home for a distance of nearly a mile.

Dorothy Yates stood on the front porch of the double log cabin looking earnestly in that direction, shading her eyes from the hot summer sun with her hand, and turning occasionally to look with uneasy glance at a man who sat with bent head and scowling visage just within the open door.

She was dressed in plain homespun made in the simple fashion of the region and entirely destitute of adornment, but it fitted her exquisite form to perfection, and the snowy neck and rounded cheek, touched with the tints of perfect health, needed no artificial ornaments to add to the beauty which was already perfect.



"Ye ar' a goin' whar ye sent Silas Yates!"

Hiram Yates raised his head and looked at her.

"Ay," he mutters, "it is true. What they say about my gal is the truth. She is the purtiest creatur' in the two counties an' the pride of her ole father's heart, but she shall never marry one of that Baker gang. No; I'll kill her first!"

Just then an exclamation burst from the girl's lips and she dropped her hand from her brow with a gesture of despair.

"What is it, Dorry; is somebody comin'?"

"Yes, father; Alec Wilson is coming down the Newbern road. I am afraid that somethin's happened sure enough, for he carries his gun and rides like one possessed."

"I knowed it; I knowed them devils could never let the peace last!" exclaimed the old man fiercely, springing to his feet. "Well, they brought on the war before an' they got the wust of it, an', by the eternal, they will git the wust this this time!"

The flashing of a horse's feet in the ford of the river was followed by rapid hoofbeats on the hard roadbed and the next moment a man galloped into view from behind the row of pawpaw bushes that flanked the road on the side next the cabin.

"Hello, Hiram Yates!" he called, as he drew rein in front of the door, "an', howdy, Dorothy," he added, as she stepped from the interior of the room whither she had retired at sight of him.

"Hiram, ye're wanted over to Hylton, an' that mitey quick, I can tell ye. Ole 'Lias Baker an' his gang ar' on the rampage ag'in, an' we uns is gatherin' there an' makin' ready to meet them. They ar' waitin' orders for ye to go an' take the lead."

Hiram Yates was an old man, but in the wiry, athletic old frame there was no sign of senility. His step as he strode toward the little front gate where the messenger had reined his panting steed, was springy as a boy's, and in the gray eyes, now flashing with anger, was none of the childish timidity of old age.

"So the report that the Baker gang hev' been at their old tricks ag'in is true, is it?"

"Yes."

"An' they waylaid young Vance, yer brother-in-law, an' shot at him, an' then burned his barn?"

"Yes; an my God, man, don't ye know? Lema n' John Baker an' one other went to the cabin uv Silas Yates, yer own nephew, last night an' 'cause he said that whoever shot at Jim Vance from ambush was a dirty coward, they called him to the door an' there in the presence uv his wife an' little children shot him down in cold blood. I thought ye knowed."

"Killed him, killed Silas Yates, my own brother's child," ejaculated the old man, fiercely, a light beginning to burn beneath the shaggy eyebrows that was terrible to behold. "An' who was the other cutthroat, did ye l'arn?"

His informant bent his head and, glancing at the girl who stood on the porch, almost whispered his reply, but the words, low as they were spoken, fell upon her ears like a weight of lead:

"Warden Deane."

The old man turned the shade of death with the exception of a livid spot which burned on either cheek, and his whole frame trembled with ire.

"Warden Deane!" he exclaimed. "D'ye hear that, Dorothy? Warden Deane, who thought he was good enough to be the husban' of the purtiest gal in the New River Valley an' the son-in-law of Hiram Yates. By the eternal powers, his blood shall flow jest as he an' his gang spilt pore Silas', an' by my han', too! Da'ter, d'ye hear?"

But his daughter made no response. She had heard too much already, and though hers was not the kind of nature to find relief in swooning, that almost universal panacea for overcharged feminine sentiment, even her feelings had a limit beyond which they could bear no more. She shed no tears and made no outcry, but the delicate bloom faded from her cheeks and left them pale as marble, and in the gray eyes shone a terror too deep to find relief in outward demonstration.

Warden Deane, he whom she had esteemed as the very soul of manhood and whom she had learned to love as her heart of hearts told her she could never love another: Warden Deane guilty of brutal, cowardly murder! No; it was not true; she could never believe it. Only a week before, when the premonitory rumblings of the storm that had now broken upon them, were beginning to be heard; when neighbor talked with neighbor in low tones, with lowering brow and clenched fist, he had promised her that if the feud were renewed he would take no part in it. Surely, he had not been false to his promise. In the five years she had known him he had never told her a lie. Why should she believe him false now? She would not

Her meditations were broken by the voice of her father and she listened mechanically.

"We will never rest until Elias Baker an' his whole bloody gang are wiped out of existence. I hev' vowed afore that if this thing ever did come up ag'in that there would be no stoppin' ontil our set or their'n, one or t'other, was no more. As to Warden Deane, this arm shall lay him low. Nothin' on earth can save him, I sw'ar it!"

The old man shook his sinewy arm as he spoke, and his jaws clenched together in grim determination.

"Oh, father, don't talk so. He may be innocent. For my sake don't do nothin' until you know."

The girl had gone to her father's side and thrown her arms about his neck. She was weeping now and at the novel sight the old mountaineer stood taken aback with astonishment. It was an unusual thing for this beautiful child of his, who inherited her father's stanchness of character and a part of his iron will, to give way to tears.

"Oh, father, promise me that you will shed no blood until you are certain who the murderers are. Won't you promise?"

But he was not to be moved so easily. The wave of astonishment and perhaps of momentary softening gave place to the tide of anger that surged through his soul.

Pushing her roughly away, he exclaimed: "Da'ter, what is it ye ask? Do I not know who the vipers are who have done this thing? Don't I know who the set of devils be who for twenty years hev' been the enemies of me an' mine? Yes; even when they pertended to be at peace, they were at their old tricks workin' ag'in my interests an' doin' me every dirty trick in their power. The day of reckoning is at hand an' they must settle their accounts in their own blood!"

The girl made no further remonstrance. She knew that when her father's mind was made up it was as useless to try to change it as it would have been to try to shift the current of the river from its channel and force it across the great blue mountains in the distance.

She reentered the house and threw herself into a chair. There was nothing to do but wait. Had she been a man and able to take part in the terrible work that she knew must ensue—even that would have been a relief. But to sit and wait while those who were dearest to her in all the world were arrayed against each other, seeking one another's lives, it was terrible.

Presently her father came into the room and she heard the rattle of his Winchester as he took it from the rack over the door. Then the door closed and he was gone.

When she went out again on the porch she could see two horsemen just entering the pines on the far side of the river. One was her father, the other was Alec Wilson. They were going to the gathering of their clan at Hylton—and then?

CHAPTER II.

A NOCTURNAL VISITOR.

The origin of the "War," as the bitter and bloody feud between the Yates and Baker families was locally known, antedated the beginning of our story by a period of two decades.

Then on a bright spring day Alan Baker, brother to Elias Baker, the present leader of the Baker faction, had given a "log rolling," to which every family in a radius of ten miles was invited. The Yateses, then on the best of terms with the Bakers, were among the first to respond to their neighbor's friendly call and early in the day hastened to share in the hard work and hearty cheer of the occasion.

All went well until late in the afternoon. Then when the fiery natures of the hardy mountaineers had been inflamed to the highest pitch by sundry liberal potations from the great stone jug which sat in the center of the field, a quarrel arose—no one ever knew how, nor what about—between Alan Baker and Rufus Yates. The former seized an ax and before any one could interfere Yates lay dead at his feet, his head cleft in twain. Even when he stood glaring at the mutilated corpse of his former friend, the lust of murder yet burning in his unrepentant heart did Alan Baker pay the penalty of his rashness.

Hiram Yates saw his brother fall and seizing a rifle which leaned against a nearby tree, he shot his slayer through the heart.

That was the beginning. No more fatalities occurred that day, but the friends of the slain bore the bleeding forms of the murdered men toward their respective homes with scowling faces and set teeth, and curses and threats were heard mingled with the lamentations of the bereaved families.

From that time for a period of ten years murders and assassinations were of common occurrence.

A Baker rarely met a Yates or a Yates a Baker that the meeting did not end in deadly strife. Friends of the opposing factions took the matter up and the feud spread until hundreds were involved. Finally the strife had assumed such proportions that it was deemed necessary to send government troops to the scene; the leaders were arrested and a tardy peace exacted, which through the mediation and pleading of the more conservative citizens of the district, had lasted until the time our story opens.

Warden Deane, now the object of Hiram Yates' most vindictive enmity, had taken no part in the fighting of ten years before. Indeed, he was then scarcely more than a child, and since that time on all occasions when the smouldering hatred between the two families and their respective adherents had seemed ready to burst into desolating flames, stirred up by some trivial or altogether imaginary infringement of each other's right, his voice had ever counseled peace.

Hiram Yates' feeling against the young man was not altogether of recent growth. The Deanes were relatives of the Bakers and Warden, being the last and only living representative of his family, which was the wealthiest and one of the most influential of the district, was naturally looked upon by the Yateses with disfavor.

Old Hiram had watched with uneasiness the progress of the friendship between the young man and his daughter, but until the present time no excuse had offered to show his disapproval in the only way compatible with his iron nature—in action and violent hostilities.

For a long time after her father's departure, Dorothy sat in the door of their cabin home and gazed toward the pine-clad hills to the westward. A look of mute despair settled upon her countenance as she looked and thought. Behind those hills toward which the sun was now slowly sinking was Hylton postoffice, the rendezvous of her father's friends. Behind them, too, but further to the northward, was the Baker neighborhood and the home of Warden Deane. Before the great red orb which even now seemed to be turning into a huge ball of blood in anticipation of coming horrors, before he should again rise in the east, what might not happen?

She knew enough of the nature of those stern and revengeful mountaineers of whom her father was the acknowledged leader, to know that the fire of wrath which had consumed their very souls for twenty years could only be quenched in blood, and she felt that the time for its shedding was come.

With a pale, set face and a great fear at her heart she finally rose from her seat and went about the evening's work. The sun was now down and the shades of night were falling over the valley.

In the dim solitude and utter loneliness of the place, broken by no sight of living thing and no sound save the sleepy chirping of the crickets and the dismal croaking of the frogs, there was a weird uncanniness that would have caused many a maiden's heart to quake with fear, but such things held no terrors for Dorothy Yates. It was not the supernatural that she feared, but the groveling passions of blind, unreasoning humanity that smote her heart with terror. How soon might she expect the bloody form of a murdered father, friend, or lover, to be borne in lifeless and staring before her very eyes?

Hark! What sound was that?

The broom with which she had just finished brushing over the cabin floor for the third time, at last almost fell from her nerveless grasp, as the latch of the front gate clicked.

Old Cario, the great white and brown watch dog that had been her companion from the days when she was first allowed to run errands to the neighbors' houses, rose from his place by the door with an ominous growl, elevating his bristles and showing his formidable teeth in a threatening manner.

The next moment a quick step resounded on the rough porch floor, the dog's angry aspect changed to one of pleasure, and he wagged his tail and blinked his eyes knowingly, as a handsome, light-haired man of twenty-five strode quickly by him into the house.

"Is it you, Ward?" she cried, dropping the broom in her gladness as she rushed toward him.

"I was afeard they would kill you!"

"No, Dorry," he answered, gravely, "they won't do that, at least not yet. What I'm afraid of is that they will keep on till I shall have to kill some of them."

She shuddered at his words and hung her head.

"Then it's the truth, what they tell about you shootin' my cousin, Silas Yates?" A hardness crept into her tones and involuntarily she shrank away from him.

The distrust implied in her voice and manner was not lost upon him. He looked at her tenderly for a moment and then spoke.

"And have they learned even you to distrust me? Then I cannot hope to ever see this terrible thing settled."

"And do you not deserve to be distrusted? Ain't you guilty of the killin' of Silas Yates?"

"As God is my judge, I never harmed Silas Yates, nor any member of your father's family, an' whoever says I did speaks a lie!"

There was a ring of truthfulness in the young man's voice and a look upon his handsome face that left no room for doubt.

"Forgive me, Ward, for doubtin' you. They told me, an' at this fearful time one don't know what to believe."

For answer he kissed away the tears that had sprung into the pretty gray eyes and then gently led her to the door.

"D'ye see yon light?" he asked, pointing to the northwest where over the fringe of the hills a lurid glare was lifting and spreading itself in the gathering darkness.

All the color that had recently manifested itself in her face now left it and she was pale as marble.

She did not answer. Too well she understood the significance of those flaming yellow hands that were shooting upward higher and spreading the angry blood-red mantle over a greater expanse of peaceful sky.

"They're burnin' my home," he continued, after a long pause during which he strove for mastery over the passions aroused by a righteous indignation.

"They're burnin' my home an' though I've never yet harbored ill against one of them, I swear that if it wasn't that he's your own father, Dorry, I would afore the sun comes up to see their hellish work, send death through their dirty, cowardly hearts."

The girl only cowered and dropped her head upon her breast. She knew his wrath was just.

In an instant he had repented his harshness and was stooping to whisper words of comfort in her ear when the sound of horses' hoofs broke the stillness of the night.

Dorothy clutched his arm, the light of terror shining in her eyes.

"They are comin'!" she whispered, hoarsely. "For your life, go!" and she pointed toward the narrow back door.

"For your sake I go!" he answered, calmly, and the next moment he quietly stepped out, closed the door softly and disappeared in the darkness.

CHAPTER III.

ENTRAPPED.

Scarcely had the retreating footsteps of Warden Deane died away in the distance when a body of horsemen dashed up to the front gate and dismounted. The next moment the door swung open and Hiram Yates followed by half a dozen truculent-looking men strode angrily into the room. All were armed and as they entered the apartment they cast inquiring glances first at Dorothy and then about the room.

"Dorothy, has that rattlesnake from the Baker den been here?" demanded the old man, in fierce accents and with lowering brow.

The girl stood with downcast eyes and blanching cheeks for a moment before answering. Then she looked straight at her father, a gleam of defiance in the strong, flashing gray eyes.

"I've seen no snake, father, from the Baker den, nor anywhere else, but I know whom you mean, an' he has been here!"

"An' where is he now?"

"That I'm not agoin' to tell."

"What! You, my own da'ter, refuse to disclose the whereabouts of an enemy of the Yateses, an' the man who only las' night murdered yer own blood cousin? Be careful, gal, an' don't tempt me beyond myself. I may do ye harm!" The old man's eyes flashed an evil fire and a fearful look crept over his countenance. Dorothy was the one earthly being who yet retained a hold upon the withered shell which had once been Hiram Yates' heart; but even the love he bore his daughter was for the moment swept away by the tide of passion that rushed through his angry soul.

"Father, dear father, hear me an' believe me. I have never told ye a lie in all my life, nor will I now. Ward Deane is innocent of the killin' of Silas Yates an' of all intent to harm you an' yours. Listen to me, I beg you, an' provoke him no further. His anger once 'roused may be as strong as his desire for peace has been, an' now is."

"Have a care, child, I tell ye, how ye talk to yer own father. Dare ye threaten me with the bloody-minded, guilty villain? He is guilty, fer didn't Bill White yere see him with t'other creepin' away red-handed from Silas' cabin after the murder?"

The old man looked for confirmation at a tall, dark-skinned, bushy-browed son of the mountains who stood near, gun in hand, his eyes fixed upon Dorothy with a repulsive glitter. Without removing his eyes from her, he nodded in the affirmative. "I shore did," he said, "him an' the others."

Quick as a flash she turned upon him.

"Bill White, you lie!" she exclaimed. "You hate Warden Deane, because, because"—she would have said, "because I love him," but maidenly modesty forbade, and she only faltered and blushed. "You hate him an' this is your dirty work for his undoin'," she continued, after a moment's pause.

"But lay as many low, cowardly plots as you will, it will do you no good."

"Come," said a gray and grizzled mountaineer, gruffly. "Quit this ole womanish jowerin' an' les' perceed to bizness. It's cl'ar th' young gal won't tell on her sweetheart, an' we needn't ax her to. Come, John Dent. Let loose yer houn's an' we'll soon know whar the rascal is, ef so be that he's bin yere."

"My God! Father, you shorely don't mean to allow this?" Dorothy cried, in terror. "Hunt down a human bein' like he was a varmint. You must not, shall not see it done!"

"Go 'way, gal!" exclaimed the father, pushing her roughly to one side. "Warden Deane's got to die, an' if the brute beasts take a part in bringin' him to his deserts, what difference can it make?"

Dorothy made no response, for just then the deep-toned bay of a bloodhound rang out on the still night air. It was followed at intervals by another and another; each successive sound becoming fainter and fainter in the distance showed that Bill White was losing no time in getting in his cowardly work.

The hounds were running already on their victim's trail. At the sound, Hiram Yates, followed by the men who yet remained in the room, picked up the Winchester, which on entering he had leaned against the wall, and stalked silently out of the cabin.

For a moment after their departure Dorothy stood transfixed with horror. "Merciful Heaven!" she exclaimed, "must this thing be done? Ain't there no power on earth to prevent this deed of blood?"

Then a sudden change came over her countenance and the gray eyes turned cold and hard as steel.

"Yes," she said, aloud, in a voice that would have startled any one acquainted with the gentle Dorothy Yates. "There is a power, I, even I myself, will prevent this cowardly outrage, or lose my life a-tryin' it. It shall not be done."

There was in the cabin a double-barreled shotgun of immense bore, old and rust-eaten, but still entire, and certain death to the ill-fated creature that stood before it, as many prowling denizens of the Virginia mountains had learned to their sorrow. This Dorothy knew to be freshly charged with buckshot, having seen her father load it only a few days before "to have," as he had said, "plenty of we'pons handy in case the Bakers stirred things up."

Snatching it from the rack over the door she sprang through the doorway and into the darkness.

Far up the narrow valley in the direction of the mountain that loomed up black and forbidding in the background she could hear the ominous baying of the hounds, now almost inaudible with the distance.

Goaded to desperation and guided by the fateful sounds, Dorothy fled onward unconscious of the rough stones that at every step tore her shoes and pierced her feet. About a mile from the Yates cabin a path left the "Pike," as the stony highway was locally known, and cut across a spur of the mountains to the left. Heedless of the rugged bowlders and jagged rocks that obstructed the way, Dorothy entered this and began the difficult ascent. The path, she knew would lead her again into the main road at a point not half a mile away, and she hoped by thus shortening the route to come up with her lover before he was overtaken, as she felt that he must be.

Before she had taken many steps up this rocky incline she was startled by the sound of a pistol shot coming from the side of the spur opposite her. It was followed by another and another in quick succession. And, to her surprise, the baying of the dogs suddenly ceased.

When she listened vainly for a renewal of the discord and sounds another noise fell upon her ear. It was the rapid footsteps of a man coming from the opposite direction.

"It is some one comin' to head me off," she said to herself, and then she exclaimed, determinedly and half aloud, as she grasped more firmly the breech of the gun and placed her hand upon the hammer.

"But they shan't stop me. If Warden Deane dies tonight some of them shall bear him company."

The injustice done her lover had transformed the gentle and mild-tempered girl. She was no longer the Dorothy Yates who would have shuddered at the thought of harming even the vilest reptile that crawls, but a resolute amazon ready and willing to sell her life, if need be, to save the man she loved.

On came the footsteps nearer and nearer. Dorothy raised the heavy gun to her face and the hammer clicked ominously. Then as the man came up she saw by the dim light of the moon that it was Warden Deane. Instantly the weapon was lowered and the tense muscles relaxed.

"Dorothy," he exclaimed, in astonishment, "is it you?"

"Yes," she replied, "but why are you coming this way? Where are the dogs?"

"I shot them on the brow of the hill over yonder, and I am doublin' on my pursuers. They think I am still on the pike road an' makin' as fast as my legs can carry me for Booth's Mill an' my friends."

"Then come with me," cried the girl, eagerly, for assured of the present safety of her lover, her womanly instinct reasserted itself, and she trembled at the thought of bloodshed. "Come with me an' let them alone in their mistake."

The two descended the steep path to the road and started arm in arm toward the cabin. So happy was the girl in the restoration of her lover whom she had looked upon as one doomed, that all thought of the danger to which he was yet exposed had vanished from her mind. And if he knew and felt the peril of his position, he was not the one to make his fears known in her presence.

Suddenly the click of a gun hammer sounded from a clump of pines by the roadside and a man stepped in front of them, his rifle cocked and presented at Warden Deane's breast. At the same moment another form leaped out from the shadow of the pines and he felt the gun which Dorothy had resigned to his charge, wrenched violently from his hands.

"An' ye think by yer tricks ter fool us, d'ye, Ward Deane? Ye'll find that though ye kin call out unarmed men frum the'r firesides an' shoot 'em down before the'r wives an' chillern's eyes, we uns are not so easy ter deal with when once our blood is up. Ye may now prepare to die, fer, by h—l, ye ar' a goin' whar' ye sent Silas Yates!"

It was Bill White who spoke, and as he finished his evil eye gleamed coldly along the barrel of his Winchester and Dorothy saw that his finger was pressing the trigger.

This startling and true story of hatred and love will be continued in the Ledger next week. Every subscriber is entitled to our cameras and patterns free as announced on pages thirteen and fifteen.

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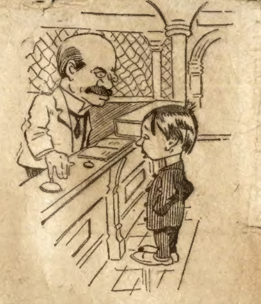


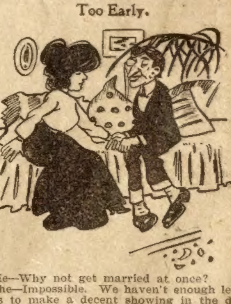
Hotel Clerk—Did you wake up No. 96?
Bell Boy—No; I couldn't wake him up, so I woke up No. 97 instead.

Ruminations of Dogdaze.

How doth the little frisky fly
  Improve each shining hour?
He first inspects the apple pie,
  Then flits from flour to flour.

And then he forthwith kneadeth dough,
  Even as you and I;
For how can he proceed to blow
  If he of dough is shy?

Too Early.



He—Why not get married at once?
She—Impossible. We haven't enough letters to make a decent showing in the divorce court.

Molly—You say you shook all over when you proposed to her?
Cholly—Yes; I did.
Molly—And how about the girl?
Cholly—Oh, she only shook her head.

A GLEVER DISGUISE.

BY HERO STRONG.

"Jorlette will be on board the 7:30 mail train. Follow him to Liverpool. Will meet you there. Look sharp! CATHCART."

This was the wording of the telegram I received one wet, ugly night last December. I was sitting in my little snuggery back of my office, before a blazing grate, with my feet in slippers and my body in a warm dressing-gown. I had a mug of hot punch and a cold mince pie on the table beside me, along with an uncut novel, and a genuine Havana, with which I intended to regale myself presently. And although I had a very strong anxiety to secure Jorlette, it must be confessed that I was altogether too comfortably situated to relish going out into the cold that dismally dirty night.

This telegram was from my chief, who, I might as well say, was a detective; and I had followed that thankless and precarious business for several years. People considered me very successful in working up difficult cases, but I was never quite satisfied with myself. I wonder if any man ever is?

This same Jorlette had given us a great deal of trouble. We had never had so keenly cunning a spirit to cope with. Strategy was matched with strategy, diplomacy with diplomacy; and scores of times, when we were sure of him, he had slipped from under our fingers and left us wondering how he managed it.

Perhaps it would be well to explain that Pierre Jorlette was a murderer, upon whose head was set a price of two thousand pounds by the Crown. A Frenchman and nobleman by birth, a gentleman by education, he had, when very young, married a beautiful English girl, with whom he passed two years of unalloyed happiness. At the end of that time some fearful shadow came between them—none knew of what nature—and the inhuman husband stabbed his wife to the heart! Her confidential maid witnessed the deed and attempted to save the life of her mistress, but Jorlette fell upon her with savage ferocity and left the two corpses lying together side by side.

These are the facts as briefly as I can place them before you. Of course, there were many minor circumstances not worth recording, as they have little bearing upon the short story I am writing.

It seemed from this telegram that Jorlette was to be on the 7:30 train. I wondered how Cathcart had got his information, but he had numerous spies constantly working for him, and probably some of them had made the discovery.

I had only to follow instructions.

For the hundredth time I took Jorlette's photograph from my pocektbook and examined the features of the murderer. It was a singularly handsome face that I saw—clearly cut, with large hazel eyes, shaded by long dark lashes, a mouth delicate and sensitive as a woman's, a high, rather delicate forehead half hidden in clustering curls of auburn hair, a form rather spare, yet well knit, and a hand symmetrical and rounded as a woman's.

The picture would have answered splendidly for that of a sentimental, sonnet-making poet—but for a murderer it was a dead failure. Nevertheless, somewhere in the past, before crime had scathed him, Jorlette had sat for it.

I changed my slippers for boots, got myself inside my fur overcoat, stuffed a valise with newspapers and blacking brushes, that I might appear a respectable traveler, and looking at my watch found I had just time to reach the station.

The train stopped ten minutes for refreshments, and taking the guard, who was an old friend of mine, sufficiently into my confidence, I was given an opportunity of looking through the carriages previous to the starting of the train.

It was a full train, but, singularly enough, there was not a red-headed man on board of it. Jorlette was red-headed, and aside from that circumstance he had a face which I flattered myself I could not readily mistake.

As I stood irresolute, and feeling very much as if I had been fooled, there came toward me from the dining-room an individual, tall and spare, with a slouch hat, a white cravat, a huge piece of game pie in his hand—and this person had red hair! And dark eyes!

I watched him closely. There was a certain dogged, skulking look about him; he would not meet my eyes, and he walked off to the extreme end of the platform by himself and remained there munching his pie until the last bell rang; and then he hurried on board with the air of one who felt that a great deal depended on his getting a seat.

I was convinced that he was my man, though he was not altogether like the photograph. Still, faces and photographs differ a great deal, since to the picture there is little expression and no color—and do not the characteristics of a face depend more on color and expression than a mere outline of feature?

He entered car No. 171, and, at a hint, the guard put me in the same compartment. There were three persons already there beside my pie-eating friend and myself. An elderly gentleman, who was reading the Times wrong side up, and nodding blandly over its fascinating columns; a pair of rural lovers, lounging on each other's shoulders, and discussing peppermint drops together; and presently we were reinforced by an old lady in a very prim bonnet, with brown ribbons, and bearing luggage in the shape of a bird cage, a basket with a cat in it, an umbrella, and a very large carpetsack.

Jorlette had produced another section of pie and was demolishing it vigorously. Seemingly, he enjoyed it. Well, I suppose even a murderer may enjoy eating pie.

Just as the train began to move, the door opened and a young lady came hesitatingly forward. You know what helpless creatures women are on their feet in a bouncing, swaying railway car, and this young beauty was no exception. She tottered and would have fallen, but I put out my arm and caught her, at the same time offering her the unoccupied seat at my side..

She blushed rosily, thanked me in the sweetest voice I had ever heard, and sank down on the cushions, covering my knees with billows of ruffling and fringing and making me feel—well, not many removes from the gates of Paradise.

A lovelier face I had never seen.. The skin was clear and fair; the mouth sweet, sensitive and a little sad; the eyes dark and melting; and the beautiful dark brown hair, which hung over her shoulders in the prevailing style, was soft as floss silk, and rippled like the bosom of a meadow brook when it flows over a bed of pebbles.

But so lost was I in contemplating the charms of this fair creature that I suddenly remembered I was not "looking sharp," as Cathcart had ordered me, and I turned to regard my unsuspecting Jorlette.

If a criminal, he was a very self-possessed one. He had finished his pie and was picking his teeth with a quill and furtively regarding his boots, which, by a peculiar tightness and stiffness of look, I judged were new ones. Occasionally he felt them, as if, perhaps, his corns were pinched, and once I felt sure he muttered something like an oath as he rubbed his long, white fingers over the locality of his great toe.

There was nothing to be done with him until we reached Liverpool, unless he attempted to leave the train, so I might as well cultivate the acquaintance of my pretty little seatmate.

She was somewhat shy, but after a while I managed to overcome her reserve, and we chatted pleasantly like old friends.

She had not been much from home, and was a little timid about traveling alone. She started nervously every time the car gave a lurch, and I deemed it my duty to put my arm around the back of the seat to calm her fears.

She had such a horror of railway accidents, she said, and her Aunt Jane had predicted, before she left home, that something dreadful was going to happen to her; and then she lifted her large, melting eyes to my face, and I drew the arm down from the seat and let it rest on her shoulder. Men are the natural protectors of women, you know.

We talked on various subjects. My sweet companion was very well informed, and her language was simple and well chosen. Before I was hardly aware of it I had told her that I was a detective, and that I was making this journey expressly to help capture Jorlette—the notorious Jorlette.

She shuddered and drew a little nearer to me.

"Dear me!" said she, nervously, "it must be dangerous business. This Jorlette, I have heard, is a desperate character. Pray, oh, do pray, be careful!"

And she dropped her voice so near to a whisper, and threw so much expression into her beautiful eyes, that I could not resist tenderly pressing the white hand so near my own, and whispered, I am afraid, something that would look absurd on paper.

That was a very delightful trip to me, and I think it must have been not altogether unpleasant to the young lady, for her cheeks were red and her eyes bright as we approached the terminus. She was going to visit her sister, who lived two or three miles inland from Liverpool, so she had to leave me before my journey was ended.

The train only halted for a moment, but I managed to press a warm kiss on her lips and to beg her to give me her address, that I might call on her.

She smiled archly up into my face.

"I will drop you a line within a week, Mr. Dayton," she said, sweetly. "Let me see—your first name is——"

"Alphonse. No. 341 T—— street, Liverpool, for the next ten days. Good-by, darling!" and I kissed her again and saw the door close behind her with a dull feeling of pain inside the left section of my waistcoat.

But I resolutely put my pretty unknown out of my mind and devoted myself to looking sharp at Jorlette, who had evidently fallen asleep. Talk about the uneasiness of a guilty conscience, indeed!

At Liverpool Mr. Cathcart stepped into the car before any one had left it. He swept his eye over the occupants and a look of blank dismay settled on his face.

"Thunderation!" cried he, "is it possible you have let him skip?"

"He is there!" said I, triumphantly, pointing to my red-headed fellow passenger.

"That!" said Cathcart, in a tone of ineffable contempt. "Alf, you're a fool! That man is the Rev. John Pennicut, rector of St. Thomas' Church, Cumberwell. How do you do, sir?" shaking hands with the pie-eater.

As for me, I was looking around for a convenient knothole to crawl into, but there seemed to be no such thing lying around loose.

Cathcart turned upon me fiercely.

"Where in the deuce is Jorlette?" he exclaimed, savagely. "Did I not order you to look sharp?"

"Yonder reverend gentleman was the only one on the train in any wise answering Jorlette's description," said I, doggedly.

The guard came up at that moment and substantiated my statement, and Cathcart was obliged to swallow his mortification with as good a grace as possible. His information relative to Jorlette's being a traveler by the 7:30 mail had come from one of his most reliable men, but there had been some mistake somewhere. We were not to pocket the two thousand pounds' reward in a hurry.

A week afterward I received a letter, written on pink paper, perfumed and elegant generally. I transcribe it:

"My Dear Mr. Dayton: Hereby I fulfill my promise of dropping you a line within the week. I am flourishing, and hope you are, also. My Aunt Jane's presentiment did not prove prophetic. I am on my way to America, where I expect to be elected to Congress with the rest of my stripe. Give my love to old Cathcart. You have no idea how funny it feels to have your lips pressed by a man's lips when you happen to be a man yourself. Sorry you are not going to get the two thousand pounds, but self-preservation is the first law of nature. Faithfully yours,

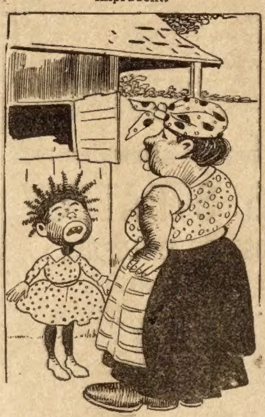
"PIERRE JORLETTE."

"Well, the secret was out!

My pretty girl was the infamous murderer himself, and Cathcart and I were done brown.

We kept the secret between us and have not yet given over our search for Jorlette, but I greatly fear that the two thousand pounds will never fall into our hands.

Imprudent.



Snowball—De doctah says li'l Eph done got de chickingpox.

Aunt Chloe—Dat so? De chile ought to be moah ca'ful 'bout de coops he visits.

◆

Suffering From Overindulgence.

Crusty Old Gent (to tramp)—What! Begging again; didn't I give you a dime yesterday for a meal?

Tramp (sarcastically)—Yes, I know, guv'nor, but I overate and I want to get some medicine for it.

◆

A Romance Spoiled.

George—I see nothing for us but to elope. Do you think your father would forgive us?

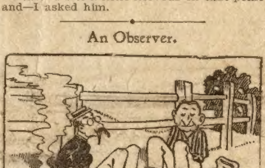
Ethel—I'm sure he would.

George—How can you be sure?

Ethel—I felt a little nervous on that point and—I asked him.

◆

An Observer.



Binks—That Miss Swifter up at the hotel is a high-strung girl, isn't she?

Jinks—Yes; I think she does lace.

◆

Choosing the Lesser Evil.

He—That young one with its crying will drive me crazy yet! Can't you get him quiet?

She—I'll try singing to him.

He—Oh, never mind. Better let him cry.

◆

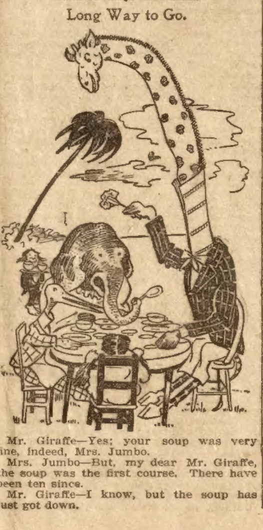
The Beggar's Sign.

Smith (seeing a beggar bearing a sign reading "Deaf and Dumb")—I'd like to help this poor fellow, but I don't know how to tell whether he is really deaf and dumb.

Beggar (softly)—Read the sign, mister.

◆

Long Way to Go.



Mr. Giraffe—Yes; your soup was very fine, indeed, Mrs. Jumbo.

Mrs. Jumbo—But, my dear Mr. Giraffe, the soup was the first course. There have been ten since.

Mr. Giraffe—I know, but the soup has just got down.

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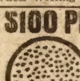

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DENVER DICK'S STRATEGY;

OR, DOWNING THE BOSS OF TELLURIDE.

BY COLONEL WILLIAM PERRY.

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CHAPTER X.

THE BRYANTS STRANGELY DISAPPEAR.

In accordance with the plan enunciated by Red Murdoch, his gang, now numbering nearly a score of well-armed men, were quietly divided in such a manner as to assail the hotel from front and rear. The two women, still in charge of several others of the gang, were conducted to the old shaft by the boss himself who superintended their descent and instructed his men as to their further movements.

By this time lights began to appear in various dwellings, for in one way or another the sleeping inhabitants were being made aware that a row of unusual proportions was taking place in their midst. It is likely that Casey himself had something to do with this spreading of information.

Inside the house Denver Dick was making his own preparations either for defense or flight as should seem best on the turn of events.

The lower window shutters had been closed and barred, and his small force was divided between the front and back entrances to the hotel.

Accompanied by Mr. Bryant, he reconnoitered the position of the enemy from the second-story, and it so happened that he was peering from a window near the old shaft when he heard the boss giving his instructions and assisting the descent of Mrs. Casey, Ellen, and their guards. The voice of Miss Bryant, pleading to be released, appealed strongly to his sympathies, while her poor father, who was also listening, became almost wild with anxiety.

Owing to the shed roof the parties below could not be seen, but Denver Dick easily learned from the words that passed where the women were to be taken, and he was turning away, when Mr. Bryant sprang past him through the open window, and on to the roof, saying:

"I cannot stand this. I must go to my daughter."

"Come back, Mr. Bryant, for Heaven's sake!" whispered the Colorado Sport, earnestly. "You will only make matters worse."

But the old man appeared to be temporarily crazed by the knowledge of his daughter's situation as evinced by the pleading sound of her voice, to which was added Mrs. Casey's shrill accents of complaint and denunciation. He paid no heed to Gentry's warning but glided rapidly down the shed roof.

"Bad cess to ye, Rid Murdoch!" Mrs. Casey was saying. "I wish——"

"Will you hush, woman!" interrupted the boss, when his speech was cut short and his person rudely prostrated by a heavy body striking him on the shoulders, and precipitating him down the shaft.

The two women and their guards had descended and as the boss came down head first he struck one of the guards, throwing the fellow down and thereby probably saving himself from serious injury.

Mr. Bryant came near following, but as he instinctively put out his hands they came in contact with the person of another one of the Murdoch gang, whom he grasped and was saved from going down the shaft himself.

Denver Dick did not hesitate an instant as to his own course, now that he saw a step taken which would place both father and daughter in the hands of their deadly foe.

He was there to protect the Bryants, and now that both were in Murdoch's hands, the possession of the hotel became a secondary matter. It was probable that Casey would soon return with help and the men within be rescued, so he jumped through the window and boldly precipitated himself after Bryant.

With greater address he alighted beside the old man while the latter was still clinging to the astonished guard, to whom Murdoch was calling from below. A blow from Denver Dick's pistol butt settled the guard, who sank down, uttering a deep groan.

Red Murdoch, hearing this and divining some hostile interruption, shouted to his men above in shrill tones, while Mr. Bryant continued his efforts to join his daughter.

"Be a man," urged Gentry to his companion. "I will rescue your daughter. Take this pistol and if a man shows himself around the corner of this building, fire. Shoot to kill!"

Thrusting a revolver into the old man's hands, Denver Dick peered down the shaft, where he could hear the two women talking to each other, and distinguished Red Murdoch's voice as he conferred with the single member of his gang who had gone down with the women.

Shouts from behind arose and Mr. Bryant's pistol went off once, twice, while bullets pattered around the two from the men whom Red Murdoch had called to his aid from their posts about the hotel.

"This will never do," muttered Gentry. "We will be shot from behind like dogs."

While peering below he had noted from the sounds, issuing thence, the probable position of the parties already down there, and also had specially located Murdoch, who was trying to get a shot at Gentry, but was balked by the darkness.

As nothing could be heard of Casey or his reenforcements and the approach of others of the gang rendered it impossible, with any degree of safety, to regain the shelter of the hotel, Denver Dick resolved upon a desperate plan. Seizing Mr. Bryant around the waist, he suddenly sprang down the shaft, remembering the soft rubbish that had broken his fall before and timing his attempt accordingly.

As they came down, the Denver Sport slightly thrust Mr. Bryant from him and alighted himself upon the shoulder of the other man, at the same time firing as best he could in the darkness at Red Murdoch, who sank down, uttering a sort of choking moan.

The two women screamed loudly, but Mr. Bryant, rising uninjured, clasped Ellen in his arms.

"My dear, dear child!" he exclaimed, brokenly, while she, recognizing the voice, uttered a cry of joy.

"Faix, me dear!" declared Mrs. Casey, much startled, yet comprehending. "If our frinds dhrop from the clouds we nadn't give up yet."

"Under cover with you!" urged Gentry, pushing both women and the old man into the old tunnel.

Pistol shots from above, as the gang began to shoot down the shaft, evinced the need of acting quickly; yet Denver Dick, having gotten his friends under cover, fired two quick shots at the figures bending over the edge of the shaft, then sprang backward just in time to avoid a body that came tumbling down, pierced by the Colorado Sport's unerring aim.

Whether Red Murdoch was dead or not, Gentry had no time to ascertain, and knowing the extraordinary cunning of the man, he felt doubtful.

"Follow me," said Denver Dick, taking Ellen's hand in his own. "Each of you will have to hold to the hand of the one immediately in front. We dare not strike a light. Mr. Bryant, you must bring up the rear. I would gladly do so myself, but it is necessary that I should lead the way."

Along the old tunnel they crept, the Sport first, Ellen next, Mrs. Casey third, and Mr. Bryant last.

"If anything moves behind you fire on it boldly," counseled Denver Dick to the old man.

"Might I not chance to hit one of our friends?" asked Bryant.

"Arrah, now!" cried the Irishwoman. "Suppose me ould man was to come along. Wouldn't it be just loike his wooden head to blunder into this heathenish place, widout knowin' where he was?"

"If Casey were about we would have heard the shouts of him and his friends. Hark! I hear others of Murdoch's men climbing down."

"While talking they were moving on as fast as possible, at times stumbling over some unseen obstruction or bumping themselves against sundry projections of the rocks.

Suddenly two flashes and reports were heard from the direction of the shaft, and balls, whistling by, struck the jagged sides of the tunnel with sharp spats.

"Throw yourselves down, crawl on ahead and wait," whispered Gentry to Ellen and Mrs. Casey, at the same time turning back himself.

"Where is Misthur Bryant!" exclaimed Mrs. Casey. "Sure, an' Oi've lost the grip av his hand!"

A flash and crack nearer by discovered to Denver Dick for a fleeting instant the figure of Mr. Bryant turned toward the shaft and crouching down with his weapon leveled, the flame from which had illumined the scene close by. Just beyond were the shadowy figures of two men, at whom, as the flash died out, Gentry himself fired with all his preternatural and unerring celerity.

Something fell heavily, and was followed by a scuffling sound, and when Denver Dick reached forth to grasp the hand of Mr. Bryant, his own fingers felt only a vacant space.

"Help——" began a stifled voice that appeared to be suddenly choked off, when the scuffling sounds increased.

The question now confronting the Colorado Sport was as to whether he should boldly attempt the old man's rescue or remain by the even more helpless women, but the feeble appeal for help was too pathetic for him to withstand; so he cautiously yet swiftly advanced toward the ominous sounds.

"Murther! Murther!"

The tones were Mrs. Casey's and the fear that some new danger menaced the women again drew Denver Dick back.

Cursing in his heart the gloom and the confusion that paralyzed his efforts, he hurried to where he had left the two men and was at once grasped by the robust hands of Mrs. Casey.

"Is thot you, Dinver Dick?" she cried. "Bad luck to us all! Where is Miss Bryant? Where is the dear gyurrl?"

"Where are you?" demanded Gentry, anxiously, at the same time feeling in every direction without effect. "Oh, Miss Bryant! Good heavens, Mrs. Casey! What has become of her?"

"I don't know. I think it's the ould divil himself is afther us. Don't ye smell nothing?"

A scent as of chloroform was in the close air and certain muffled sounds appeared to die away in the distance toward the Little Ellen Mine.

"In all my experience," thought the Colorado Sport, "never have I been worse perplexed." But aloud he asked the Irishwoman, "Did you not hear or feel anything that will give us a clew as to what has happened?"

"Sure, I heard steps; then the poor gyurrl started to cry out. Thin she stopped as if some wan had choked off her pritty voice. I reached out, but—bliss gracious! nothing could I get howld of but the rocks. Thin I screamed out and phwat ilse could I do, I'd loike to know?"

While Denver Dick, still sorely puzzled, was wondering what he had better do next, and Mrs. Casey was giving audible vent to her grief at the mysterious disappearance of Ellen, they heard loud shouts, and a sound of conflict from above, amid which the stentorian tones of Casey himself arose distinctly.

"Give it to thim, boys!" called the Irishman. "Now is the toime to show Rid Murdoch phwat Tilluride min can do whin their dander is up!"

A fusillade of firearms drowned further speech, though disconnected oaths and cries of anger or pain could be indistinctly heard.

"We can do nothing more down here," said Denver Dick. "Casey has come with his friends, and I think we have a chance of running these toughs out of town and taking possession of this mine in behalf of its rightful owner. Take my hand. We will ascend the shaft."

"And l'ave the poor gyurrl to the mercy av these divils?"

"We can do nothing down here at present. I think some of these Murdoch fellows have ways of getting about in this tunnel that I do not know of. Let us go up. They will not kill Bryant or his daughter. Their lives are important to Murdoch's plans."

"But they will carry the poor things off, the good Lorrd only knows where! And yit—I ought to be wid me husband——"

"They cannot carry them where I will not be able to find them. They shall be rescued as sure as my name is Gentry."

While speaking, Denver Dick led the woman back to the old shaft, that appeared to be deserted by the living, though they stumbled over the bodies of two men whom the Denver Sport briefly felt of, assuring himself that they were dead.

"Our own shots seem to have told," was his mental comment.

He assisted Mrs. Casey to climb up, following quickly himself, with his revolver ready in case of need.

But the fighting had shifted further down the adjacent street, and from the nature of the shouting Casey's party appeared to be having the best of it so far. The hotel was silent and deserted, apparently, those left on guard by Denver Dick having joined the party headed by Casey.

"Phwat shall I do now?" asked Mrs. Casey.

"We will enter the hotel. If all is safe there, probably you had better remain. Ah! Who is this?"

Two women appeared from a neighboring house and seeing Mrs. Casey as she stood near a lamp in front of the hotel, they recognized her and called out, whereat the Colorado Sport persuaded her to go inside with them and remain until things were quiet elsewhere.

Relieved from his charge, Denver Dick hastened after the combatants, reloading his pistols as he went, and feeling strongly dissatisfied as to the result of his invasion of the tunnel.

Red Murdoch was probably alive, for neither of the bodies below was his; and if alive it was likely that further plotting and mischief would be the result.

"The scoundrel seems to bear a charmed life," thought Gentry. "But my time will yet come——"

A man hurrying around a corner here almost ran into Denver Dick, who covered him instantly.

CHAPTER XI.

RED MURDOCH'S NEXT MOVE.

It was Blue Dave, who, after having had his wound attended to, appeared to be as sound as ever.

"Hello, Dave! Thought you were in bed!"

"Ding me, if it ain't Denver Dick! so the thunder can stay in bed with all this racket bein' kicked up everywhere?"

"What is the news? Are the gang holding their own?"

"Not much. Telluride is doin' herself gay tonight. Red Murdoch is drawin' off like he'd got his dose, hang his pictur'!"

"Then Casey roused up the town?"

"I should smile. I went and had me hurt dressed and piled down at the stable to get me forty winks, when along he come, rousin' up everybody. The gang all got together and so did we. But where was you all this time? When there's a shindy up who should be in the middle of it but you?"

Denver Dick explained as much as his movements as he thought best, whereat Blue Dave tapped his nose knowingly.

"You come along with me," he urged. "Our men have about cleared the town. I knowed they would if they ever got ashy enough. But if you hadn't come along and stirred up things wid a hot stick, Red Murdoch would have run the town to hades and back afore we'd have got up enough nerve to fight."

"Where do you want me to go, Dave?"

"I just saw Murdoch and six of his best men slippin' away like greased eels. I heard one of them say to t'other, 'We're to meet in the lower tunnel.' What d'ye think of that?"

"What and where is the lower tunnel?"

"There's where I've got ye. It isn't every galoot knows; but me brother used to work in the Little Ellen when she was first opened and they sunk a shaft and run a lead to tap the vein lower down. But it didn't pan out well, so they blocked it up."

"Well, what has that to do with rescuing the Bryants? I fear I am wasting time talking here with you."

"Ye do. Well, then, ye can go on and be none the wiser. But it's my opinion, considerin' the way you say the gal and her dad absquatulated, that right down there they'll be run up with. See?"

"That sounds reasonable. But who is to show the way?"

Blue Dave slapped his breast emphatically as he replied:

"Ef I don't, put me down as a right down ornery son-of-a-gun. Me brother put me on to that racket afore he left these dig-

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gin's for pluggin' Tornado Tom in the eye with a bulldog thirty-eight. He 'lowed if ever I got into a scrape and wanted to hide without skippin' the country complete, that the lower tunnel would be the very ringtum. They also say there is a lower outlet somewhere down near the river—a nateral seam or somethin'; but I ain't sartain about that."

"We will investigate this at once. But we must have help, Dave. You and I wouldn't mind tackling half a dozen of these rascals by ourselves, if there was nothing to do but shoot, scalp and drag out. But a helpless old man and his daughter are to be rescued, unharmed, if possible."

"Well, you're right, as ye generally air. When I'm on the shoot and kin get the drop, I don't care how many come on. But, as you say, we ought to run in on 'em in sich numbers as will give 'em no chance to cut any monkey shines. Sufferin' Jacob! Here comes a lot of our men now with Casey at the head. Listen at his big Irish mouth."

A dozen or more armed men, with a prisoner in their midst, now came up, among whom Casey's red head and pronounced brogue were much in evidence.

Denver Dick at once recognized the prisoner as Hank Rawson, who seemed to have sufficiently recovered from his wounds to take an active part in the fighting.

"By the powers!" cried Casey. "If it isn't himsilf ag'in. Men, this is Dick Gentry, the whitest man and the dead gamest sport the counthry affords. Some ov ye know him and ye've all heard av him, and glad am I to see him aloive afther the toime we've had."

Denver Dick was heartily greeted, while Rawson glowered at him wrathfully as the cause of his defeat in Animas Canon.

"Arrah for our side," said Casey, gleefully. "Be jabers! Whin I tould the boys that Gintlemin Joe av Denver had come to clane out Rid Murdoch and his gang, ivery mother's son came out, a sphoilin' fer a foight."

"You seem to have cleaned them up without much of my help," said the Colorado Sport, good-naturedly. "But now I want your help. You have run the Murdoch gang out of the town, it seems, but they have taken two helpless prisoners with them, and we must follow them up."

"Is the ould woman safe?" asked Casey, anxiously.

"She is safe and with friends. But Bryant and his daughter are both gone. They disappeared most mysteriously, yet I think I know where they have been taken. Blue Dave will act as guide, and I want six well-armed men, besides. More might be in the way where we are going, and six good fellows, who are on the shoot and will not back down, are all I need in order to face the worst Red Murdoch can now do."

"Ye can count on mesilf," cried Casey. "If the ould woman's safe there's nothing I'd loike betthur than another whack at Rid Murdoch, bad cess to his ugly, thavin' sowl!"

"If I'm left behind!" exclaimed another stalwart fellow, "dom me, if I don't fight somebody!"

"Don't ye leave me out, Casey," said another. "Red Murdoch has run the shote over us until I should be ashamed to look me old woman in the face, if I slowed up when men wanted to run the creatur' down."

"Casey," interposed Gentry, "you know these men, and I feel sure there isn't a white feather among them; but we must make a selection, though all are more than willing. You pick out the ones we want."

"Stip this way, Dan Bryson," called Casey, nothing loath. "And you, too, Tim Looney. Nelse Hatter is a good shot, and be the same token, so is Mick Doavan."

"Aain't ye goin' ter clamp down on me, Casey?" cried one.

"Look a hyur, Dan," complained another. "If you leave my head out'n the lot, I'll have yer scalp one er these fine days."

While the selection was thus noisily going on, Denver Dick happened to glance to the rear of the party. Then he called out:

"Where is your prisoner, men?"

While all were engaged anxiously over the choosing of the men intended for the expedition, Rawson had slipped stealthily to the rear, being unbound and for the time neglected.

As the Colorado Sport spoke his figure could be dimly discerned turning a street corner at a rapid rate of speed.

"Afther the spalpeen, you thot ain't picked out to go wid us," roared Casey, energetically. "Give him a taste of cold lead, the ongr'ateful, misbehavin', ondesarvin' imp av sin!"

Several started in swift pursuit and presently the crack of several revolvers evinced that the fellow was not beyond reach.

Meanwhile, Dick Gentry marshalled his chosen band, which together with himself, Casey and Blue Dave, numbered seven souls, and started toward the hotel. On the way they met several men returning from the pursuit of Hank Rawson.

"Where is your man?" demanded Denver Dick.

"I reckon as how we winged the galoot," replied one. "But he only run the faster and we finally lost sight of him in the dark."

"That means bad luck," grumbled Blue Dave. "Hank's got a long ear and he heard what we said about follerin' up Murdoch and the lower tunnel and all that. D'ye know what it means?"

"It means they may try to get clear away," said the Colorado Sport. "I know Rawson. He is as sharp as they make 'em, and I have no doubt he is now scooting for Murdoch's last rendezvous like a dry duck for water."

"The gang have horses somewhere, I feel sure," remarked one man.

"Well, Dave, they got yours in Animas Canyon, if they have no more," commented Gentry. "The sooner we are after them the better."

"Let us all go!" cried some of those returning from their ineffectual pursuit of Rawson. "We can't afford to take any chances on Red Murdoch, for if he gets away now he will come back on us some time when we ain't lookin' for him and give the town thunder."

"Didn't you mention something about a possible outlet near the river?" queried Denver Dick of Blue Dave.

"Right you are, boss. But, mind, I ain't sart'in——"

"Well, we know there is the outlet to the main tunnel. It is clear to me some one ought to be on watch there."

So it happened that several armed men were dispatched by a roundabout way to the foot of the mountain near where the men who had captured Mr. Bryant had brought him into the Little Ellen Mine.

"Now, Dave, forward," urged Denver Dick. "We are losing too much valuable time. Are you back, Casey?"

"Thot Oi am," replied the Irishman, who was swinging several lighted lanterns which he had procured. "The ould woman's all roight, by the token thot she t'umped me over the head for sthayin' so long whin, as she said, a poor guyrrl was nadein' me attintions."

The party set out again when, to the surprise of several, Blue Dave presently paused before Casey's hotel.

"Phwat the divil an' Tom Walker are ye sthoppin' there for?" demanded the innkeeper.

CHAPTER XII.

THREADING SECRET PASSAGES.

Blue Dave's reply was a surprise to every one present.

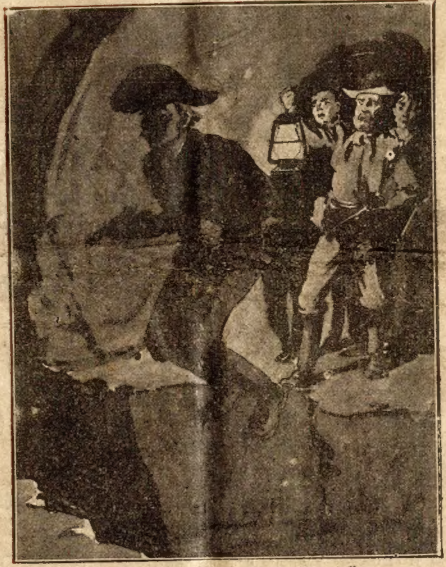
"How long have ye had the runnin' of this 'ere house, Casey?"

"Thray year come next November, ye dolted dough head. And phwat has thot to do wid chasin' down Rid Murdoch?"

"And whose house is that next door to ye?"

"Ye know as well as I thot it belongs to the boss hisself and moightily scandaloized I've been at hovin' such a neighbor."

"Little d'ye know wot went on in them houses afore your time. In them days the boss had both houses and run the hotel. And d'ye want to know where we're goin'?"



"His well knit figure rose in the air."

Casey was about to reply when Gentry impatiently said:

"Come, Dave, Go on, go on. You can explain things afterward. While we are fooling here Red Murdoch and his prisoners may be getting beyond our immediate reach."

Two minutes later the entire party, under the pilotage of Blue Dave, were entering the cellar of the Telluride Hotel much to the perplexity of Casey and his wife, the latter having made her appearance.

"D'ye see thet big hogset?" queried Blue Dave, pointing at an immense cask in one corner.

"Oi've seen it so often Oi'd a taken it out av here, if it hadn't been too big for the doors."

"Do you see that it's been moved a little, or are ye stone blind?"

As Dave averred, the great cask had been moved sufficiently to allow the passage of one person at a time behind the same, though to a casual view the change was hardly apparent.

"I niver knowd tho't before," said the hotelkeeper. "And yit to sphake the truth, I niver wur thot curious to find out."

Blue Dave, entering behind the hogshead, pulled out a loose stone or two, disclosing a hole large enough to admit the body of a man.

"Thot hole," he explained, "was used when Murdoch ran this hotel. He didn't use it for any good purpose, either, they said. But whatever Red Murdoch said or did went in this town then, as it has done since. Come on, now. Give me wan of the lanterns."

With Blue Dave leading, the party pushed through the aperture thus made and found themselves in another cellar much like the one they had left though somewhat smaller.

In a dark corner where two or three old packing cases had been drawn aside, the stage driver found another hole in the stone wall, beyond which all was darkness.

"Here is where Murdoch and his men passed through, not half an hour ago," said Dave. "He took them into his own house, which is now empty, then down through, forgetting, I guess, that there might be others who would get onto his racket."

"Well," urged Denver Dick, "what are we stopping here for?"

"Lade on, Dave, ye divil," said Casey. "Ye've got good backin' now, as iver twisted the tail av ould Nick himsilf."

"This is as far as I ever went," declared Blue Dave, dubiously. "My brother told me the passage beyont goes into an old working, and once there ye go apiece, then turn to the left and go down."

Denver Dick, who had been eyeing Dave closely, at once passed to the front and entered the cramped aperture with a pistol in one hand and a lantern in the other.

He was in a narrow, low passage, evidently dug through the earth and rock, that led somewhat deviously to an old mine working, striking it obliquely, and in such a way that any stranger groping through the darkness could hardly detect its outlet.

The others silently followed, when Dick Gentry brought Dave again to the front and bade him search for the other turning spoken of by his brother, who had been a sort of adherent of the boss in former days.

While this was going on Gentry, with a lantern, briefly searched that part of the working where the Bryants had so mysteriously disappeared and found a sort of deep recess in which the mysterious abductors might have concealed themselves in the darkness.

Under the old shaft the two bodies still lay. A call from Blue Dave made him hasten back to the party, who were waiting in front of another small hole close to the floor of the tunnel and almost hid from casual view by a projecting shoulder of rock.

"Why did you not come down the old shaft instead of taking us all around through those cellars?" demanded the Denver Sport of Dave.

"Wot shaft? Blamed ef I knows of any old shaft."

"I guess Oi'me the only wan as knows av the shaft and I found it out by accident wan day," explained Casey. "But, sure, an' I didn't know that the place Dave wanted to pass through and this old worrkin' were wan and the same. But lade on some wan. We're only losin' toime. Oi'me afraid thot felly Rawson, afther overhearin' wot we said, has run on ahead and by givin' Murdoch warrnin' has turned our cake into dough."

"Don't you think the men we sent round the mountain to intercept a possible flight will reach there in time?" queried Denver Dick.

"It's hard to say," commented Blue Dave. "It is a good bit round."

"Faix!" cried the Irishman, impatiently. "What are we shtandin' here for. Am Oi to go in first?"

Denver Dick, glancing at the faces around him, saw so much hesitation imprinted thereon that he again pushed forward, dropped to his knees, and crept through the aperture, followed by Blue Dave and Casey. The others came one by one, revolver in hand, and with lanterns held up so as to illumine the close, earth smelling passage as much as possible.

Silently they crept along on irregular downgrade for fifty yards or more, when the passage widened and presently they were able to walk instead of crawl.

It would appear that a natural seam in the rock had been enlarged and altered in various places, until it would admit the passage of human beings, though the sense of semi-suffocation and close-pressing walls of earth and rock, gave one a sense of being buried alive.

On they went, Denver Dick leading, threading sundry crooks and turnings, at times down steep places where they had to proceed cautiously and not without danger. Suddenly the Colorado Sport stopped at the edge of a chasm, beyond which a distant light twinkled faintly, at times almost disappearing, then flaring up again like the spasmodic flicker of a dying fire.

"Phwat the nation is thot?" queried Casey, pushing forward as he stared at the light. "If Rid Murdoch——"

"Easy!" exclaimed Gentry, drawing the Irishman back. "Look where you are going, man."

"By the poipe of Saint Pathrick! If all thim fellys jumped across that place they're a dale activer than most folks."

"Where is the bottom of the cussed hole?"

"No one man can jump over that. There must be some other way to get over."

"Look yonder!" said Denver Dick, pointing forward. "There is a plank. The cunning chaps, after crossing themselves, have placed the plank, as they doubtless thought, beyond the reach of any one else from this side."

"How do you reckon, Hank Rawson got across if, as ye say, he went after Red Murdoch to warn him we were coming?" queried one man.

"He probably called for help. It would be easy for some one about yonder light to run back and throw out the plank to a friend."

"Well, the question is, not what Rawson did—and be dommed to his ugly pictur—but what we are to do," interposed Casey.

"One of us must jump this gorge," said Gentry, quietly, at the same time examining the chasm closely with his lantern.

It was some twelve feet or so wide, the sides being perpendicular, though rough, and far down the eye caught a twinkle of running water, which the ear could faintly hear. The chasm extended clear across the passageway which it seemed to terminate, for beyond the space widened into a sort of cavern as far as could be seen.

"Gentlemen," remarked Blue Dave, "I haven't got wings and I can't fly. Therefore, I don't consider as there's any particular harm in my backin' down right here."

The stage driver's sentiments appeared to meet with gloomy general approval, for the group stared silently at the obstruction, nor made any move to adopt Gentry's bold suggestion.

He, expecting some such conclusion, had measured the width of the opening with his eye, and now, laying down his lantern, thrust his revolver into his belt. Casey eyed him with growing astonishment.

"Phwat are ye up to now?" he demanded.

"Stand back, please, all of you, and give me free play," was the Colorado Sport's next speech as he stepped to the rear in order to have more room for his intended effort.

But Casey and Blue Dave, who really liked him as an old acquaintance, begged him to desist.

"Sure, you're the best [illegible]t and the gamest sport in the Shtate," [illegible]an the innkeeper. "But as Dave says [illegible] himself, ye can't fly."

"Let us hurry back and go round the mount'in," suggested Blue Dave. "We can leave a guard here in case any one tries to come back."

"We would be too late. Murdoch would have too great a start. We are losing time as it is. Come, I know my powers. What will you bet that I don't land safe on the other side?"

"D'ye think I'd lay money against your life? Divil fly away wid me if I do!" And Casey turned away his head, not wanting to see his friend risk so daring an attempt.

The others stood aside, holding high the lanterns, while Denver Dick, crouching like a panther, darted forward swiftly.

Planting his right foot upon the edge of the chasm, his well-knit figure rose in the air, while more than one observer held his breath.

This thrilling story of Wild West days will be continued next week. Cameras and patterns are given free to all subscribers to the Ledger as advertised on pages thirteen and fifteen.

The Mosquito Plant.

The mosquito plant, of which some account was printed recently, is, it appears, no new discovery, Sir George Birwood, the distinguished physician, physiologist and botanist and Oriental authority, sends an interesting letter on the subject to the London Times. He says that this plant and allied basils have been known "from time immemorial" through India as a defense against mosquitoes and a prophylactic in malarial districts. The Hindus recognize several species such as "wild Tulsi," "white Tulsi," or "black Tulsi," Krishna-tulsi and Tulsi par excellence. One or other of these basils are found growing everywhere in India, especially about temples and most of them are grown in gardens. In farther India especially they are planted upon and about the graves, and a decoction of the stalks and leaves is a universal remedy in cases of malarial fever. Sir George Birwood says that when the Victoria Gardens and Albert Museum were established in Bombay the men employed in these works were at first so pestered by mosquitoes and suffered so much from malarial fever that, on the recommendation of the Hindu manager, the whole boundary of the gardens was planted with holy basil and any other basil at hand, on which the plague of mosquitoes was at once abated and fever altogether disappeared from the resident gardeners and temporarily resident masons. The site of the gardens had before been one of the worst malaria stricken spots on the island of Bombay. No one in those days knew anything of "the mosquito-malaria theory." Sir George himself used myrrh as a protection against mosquitoes. They never, he says, came near any bed in which a little myrrh was burnt or a little tincture of myrrh sprinkled when retiring for the night.

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General Miles is a good deal of a rough rider himself.

The efforts of some people to look pleasant are positively painful.

There is some hope for a man as long as he knows how to take a hint.

If beauty were taxable the fair sex would never try to dodge the assessor.

College professors and the bootblacks both strive to polish the understanding.

Lack of originality in some people's conversation displays their good judgment.

Common sense would prevent many divorces. It would also prevent many marriages.

"Know thyself," says the old adage. A man can find out quite a good deal about himself by running for office.

It sometimes happens that the world thinks a man is wise simply because he doesn't take the trouble to explain his mistakes.

Mr. Hanna referred to him the other day as "our young, heroic President." Uncle Mark knows a band wagon when he sees one.

College students who rushed to Kansas have now discovered that helping in the harvest field is a great occupation to read about.

Lightning struck Oyster Bay Tuesday, but inflicted little injury on the home of strenuosity. What happened to the lightning is not reported.

Grover Cleveland may not get a third term nomination, but it must be admitted that he is hiding the Parker boom from public view at present.

Child labor conditions in Pennsylvania are the worst in the world. But what could be expected in a State that submits to Quayism and Pennypackerism?

Professor Henry C. Adams thinks a new code of industrial morals is needed. This is the first intimation that there ever had been a code of industrial morals.

New York is to have a building forty feet long, twenty-six feet wide and seventeen stories high. They might save valuable space by using the building as its own chimney.

THE HAND OF FATE;

OR, THE MYSTERY OF THE CLARINET CLUB.

By Constance Beatrice Willard.

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Begun in No. 29, July 18. Subscriptions can begin with that issue, or back copies can be procured from news stands, or our agents, or by mail from office of publication.

CHAPTER XIII.

Day after day had dragged its weary length, and the law took the usual course with regard to Russell Welden. In due time he was indicted by the grand jury and committed to await trial for the murder of his cousin. Public opinion ran high against him and of his numerous friends and acquaintances, Wickersham alone believed him innocent, although Ada Campbell was finally influenced by the latter to declare in favor of the man, who a few short months before had stood high in his profession, honored and esteemed.

What were his thoughts as he sat alone in his cell, the same day as that upon the incidents occurred which are narrated in the preceding chapter. What inward fever was consuming him and marking black shadows under his eyes, that still looked the world in the face, although they saw always before them the hangman's noose? Was it the consciousness of innocence, or the despair of guilt which enabled him to preserve that same even calmness of manner? Was it resignation to the inevitable or a nobility of purpose which kept up his courage, although his face continued white as a dead man's? These questions he alone could answer.

This morning, it was a day or two after he was indicted, Wickersham came for his daily call, accompanied by Helms, who was exerting himself to the utmost to discover some reasonable line of defense, and who was more than ever convinced of his client's guilt, although he confessed that he was inclined to think that the crime had been committed in a moment of such violent rage that Russell might have no remembrance of it. To all Helms' remarks of this nature, as well as to those of the outside world, Wickersham said little, although at times he could scarcely refrain from violent partisanship. It had been a matter of astonishment to him, that while he had been called upon to identify the body, no questions were asked him relative to the quarrel at the banquet. Helms decided that the coroner had purposely omitted the young broker, knowing that he was so earnestly in favor of the prisoner, and that his testimony would not have altered the verdict, while it might have complicated matters somewhat. At the trial his testimony could be admitted, it was not necessary at the inquest. At times, Mr. Helms earnestly wished that some kind providence would remove Wickersham to another State during the trial, for he feared the friendship of the little man would work against his client, in that it was so violent.

As the two men passed in, they glanced at each other, with a "I told you so" air, for, as usual, Russell was sitting reading, and was apparently unmoved by a virulent editorial against him, in the sheet he was glancing over.

He smiled at the two—a strange smile, which brought a lump up in Wickersham's throat whenever he saw it, so different was it from the old-time hearty laugh, and, indicating the editorial, said quietly:

"Evidently, I am no favorite with the press."

"As long as you continue to stand in your own light, you won't be," Wickersham replied, hotly.

Russell raised his eyes to Wickersham's, and returned, easily:

"Hal, no man ever had a more generous friend than you are to me, but just pause a moment. I am a lawyer myself, and although I have given little or no attention to the criminal branch of my calling, I am able to look dispassionately and intelligently on my own case. I know that there is not the slightest chance for me. Of course, I see what your line of defense is going to be, Mr. Helms. You will contend that I am insane, yet do you think I look like a man out of my mind?"

"Not now, Mr. Welden," and Mr. Helms' words had a double meaning.

Again did Russell smile that strange, unearthly smile.

"I have always had my wits about me, although I do get into frightful rages. See here, Wickersham, let the matter drop right here. You have faith in me because you are such a faithful little fellow you can't help holding on, but you are alone."

"Miss Campbell believes in you, too," cried Wickersham.

"Because you do, my boy. Before this trouble came upon me I had many friends, business associates, but, thank God, no relatives, except Frank. You two are the only ones who have been to see me except reporters. There is no one bearing my name who has to feel shame for me. Murder is not quite like any other crime, especially murder which is not premeditated. Let us take for granted that in a fit of blind rage I struck my cousin, not intending to kill him, but simply to punish him for meddling with my affairs, and after taking the package from him, left him lying in the street; that another came by and finding my knife on him, stabbed the poor boy and threw him in the river. Might not I be really innocent of murder? Did you ever think of such a state of things?"

Wickersham had not taken his keen eyes from his friend's face while he was speaking, and when Russell turned to him with the final question, he simply shook his head and said, earnestly:

"Russ, don't play the fool at this day. You can't impose upon us with such a story."

"No, Mr. Welden, either you are wholly guilty or wholly innocent. If you took that package, how came it stained with blood?"

Welden looked from one man to the other, then said, gently:

"If you will drop the matter entirely and let it alone, I will plead guilty and get it over as soon as possible. I cannot be cleared, so why go through the farce."

"Russell Welden, look at me, I'm your friend, and I believe I think more of you than I do of all my relatives put together. You know this. As your friend, I ask you, can you look me in the eyes and tell me that you are guilty? That you stabbed Frank? That you, whose integrity and honor I have believed in as in nothing else, are a murderer? That this hand I have grasped thousands of times in friendship and good fellowship, is stained with the blood of one who had heaped kindness upon you? Tell me, can you do that?" Great beads of perspiration were streaming down Wickersham's face as he concluded. Helms looked on in speechless admiration at the eloquence which made every word so forcible. Russell Welden sat with his eyes on the floor, until Wickersham ended, then he arose and went to the window of his cell and stood looking out for a few moments, while a deathlike silence reigned in the cell. At last he turned about, and said, with a ring of despair in his voice:

"I don't look at it exactly as you put it, Wickersham, but, to save your harming yourself, and because I realise the hopelessness of my case, I will say that I am guilty."

"That's the damndest lie ever uttered," cried Wickersham. "Come on, Helms, I'm going to work my own way now. You'll not see me for several days, Russell, until you have come to your senses," and grasping the astonished attorney by the arm, he started for the door.

"Wickersham, wait, what are you going to do?" Russell cried, advancing several paces and stretching out his hands.

"Find out who did murder Frank; no, it's no use saying anything more, we're off," and he dragged Helms into the corridor with him. According to their usual plan, neither said a word regarding the case until they were seated in Wickersham's private office, then Wickersham, leaning forward, began talking earnestly, and after half an hour, Helms replied;

"You should have told this to me before. Still you prove nothing, after all."

"I am fully convinced in my own mind."

"My boy, if all of us had as devoted friends as you, our way through life would be made easy."

"Clear Russell's, and yours will be as smooth as you could possibly wish."

"For the sake of our friendship, I am doing all I can, and am devoting almost my entire time to the case."

"Devote it all. You will lose nothing. Here, take this on account," drawing his check-book toward him, and writing a check for $5,000. If you clear him, I will draw my check for $50,000. Anyway, you shall have $5,000 more for your efforts."

Mr. Helms sat speechless, with the slip of paper which meant so much in his hand. Such friendship as this was past understanding.

"Now, we must get some of the best detectives in the city. I am going to have every man present at that banquet shadowed, and this other party, too. We will ferret out the record of every man, woman and child in Chicago, if necessary. Come over with me to a private detective agency I know of. The head is a personal friend of mine, and will give me his entire force if necessary. I shall offer a reward of $10,000 for the apprehension of the real murderer. We have been standing still too long; now it is work, and hard work until the real criminal stands in Russell Welden's place, no matter how high we may have to strike."

So energetic was Wickersham, that by afternoon he had every line laid and an immense force of the most expert detectives investigating and shadowing many of the leading people of the city. Then he was free to turn his attention in another direction.

CHAPTER XIV.

Owing to her bereavement, Ada Campbell denied herself to all but her intimate friends, among whom she included Wickersham, for since he had so heartily espoused Russell's cause, he appeared to her to be part of the family. The relations between the two cousins had been more like that of brothers, and Ada had grown to look upon Russell as Frank's dearest friend and brother. To her the very idea that he could for a moment have contempated any harm to her lover, was preposterous, but as her father told her, she was a sentimental little girl, whose feelings ran away with her. While Mr. Campbell had given his consent

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to the marriage, being an excellent business man himself, he had not entirely approved of Frank Welden, in spite of his excellent character and wealth.

"Money is a good thing," he would say, "but ability to earn it is much better. Better than that is the faculty to save and invest. Any fool can inherit money. It does not require much intellect to earn it, but it is the smart fellow who saves after he has earned and then invests wisely."

To Mr. Campbell's keen business sense, Wickersham was many times the superior of Frank Welden, and probably he alone knew the secret of the former's life, and understood why the kind-hearted little fellow appeared uninterested in any of the many charming girls of his set. Two years before, when Ada had just left school, her father had taken her to the White Mountains for a summer of camp life before she entered society. Here the party was joined by Wickersham and several other friends, and for a month the young stock broker was Ada's daily companion. Then Frank Welden appeared upon the scene, and Wickersham's star set. It was a blow to the father, who recognized the young man's many good qualities, to have the daughter choose another man, who, however worthy, did not come up to his requirements. However, Mr. Campbell said nothing, kept Wickersham's secret and his own disappointment to himself, but when he found his favorite an almost daily visitor upon his daughter, his satisfaction was extreme.

Wickersham, however, did not appear in the guise of a lover, but simply as a friend and supporter of Russell Welden. Whatever his own sentiments, he had been too loyal to Frank Welden when he was alive to trespass by even a word or look, and now that he lay in an untimely grave, and his nearest friend and cousin languished in the county jail, he would have scorned to approach Ada with words of affection, even if he had not known that there was no surer way of forever destroying any hope for the success of his suit. She had always liked him, and now in her sorrow, he seemed like a perfect pillar of strength, and when the hands of the clock pointed to four each day she grew to listen for his ring, and to lean on him for comfort and sympathy.

This afternoon, Wickersham, who was feeling much more encouraged, was admitted to Ada's presence, but was annoyed to discover that she was not alone. On one side of the bright wood fire, for Ada despised gas and never used it, he saw the solid figure of Miss Stoneborough, and on the other, the slight one of Mrs. Tanquer.

Disappointed though he was, Wickersham greeted both ladies, as well as his hostess with a manner which would have defied detection, and began to talk upon ordinary matters, while Ada served them all with tea.

Mrs. Tanquer looked up in a moment, and asked, gently:

"Can you not tell us something about poor Mr. Welden?"

"Nothing new, I am afraid," Wickersham replied courteously, although he could not overcome a dislike for this gentle lady, whom he regarded as the indirect cause of the trouble which had fallen upon his friend.

"Is there no way to extricate him?"

"None but to discover the true murderer," Wickersham replied, bluntly. To him there seemed something horribly unjust in that this delicately nurtured woman, surrounded by luxuries and sheltered from all the evils of life, should sit there in the warmth and comment in her well-bred voice on the chances of his friend escaping the hangman's noose, which in a way her own dainty hands had helped to weave.

"My dear Mr. Wickersham, has that not already been done?" and Mrs. Tanquer sighed deeply.

"You mean?" Wickersham's voice was a little sterner than before.

"Yes, I understand, Forest and Mr. Tanquer have both told me of your loyal devotion to Mr. Welden, in the face of all his associates; the facts, evidence, everything, but, after all, what is there to support your advocacy?"

"I agree with Mr. Wickersham," Ada said, gravely.

"Well, I don't," broke in Miss Stoneborough, throwing back her costly sables, and taking her comfortable-looking foot from the fender. "It's awful good in you to stand up for him, but then we can't run counter to facts."

Wickersham's face was almost purple, so angry had he become, but he controlled his voice wonderfully, as he replied:

"Mrs. Tanquer, you do not know or appreciate the man you are talking about. Some men might be so vicious, some might be so foolish, but Russell Welden is not."

"Foolish, Mr. Wickersham?"

"Yes, madam, foolish, for after all, the quarrel arose over his desire to protect a woman's name, and no woman no matter how good and true she may be, is worth killing a man for, especially a man of Frank Welden's character."

Both Miss Campbell and Miss Stoneborough turned pale. It had been impossible to keep Mrs. Tanquer's name entirely out of the matter, and it seemed almost incredible that she should have heard nothing of it, but she looked perfectly unconscious as she replied:

"True, but men do many things that are foolish, wicked and unheard of, in tempests of anger. I knew and was much attached to Mr. Welden, and he is the last man I would have suspected, but I am afraid I am a fair weather friend, judging myself by you, in that I cannot believe him innocent of the deed, although I do believe it was commited in a moment of violent rage, which rendered him really not responsible."

With a horrible sinking at his heart, Wickersham could not but admit that there was truth in her reasoning, but he replied, earnestly:

"An angel from Heaven could not convince me of Russell's guilt," and Ada nodded her sunny head in assent.

The silence which followed was broken by Miss Stoneborough, who exclaimed loudly, rising to her feet:

"I have it. What we must do is to buy everybody. Buy the jury and every one connected with the whole affair. We'll all contribute. You can count on me for a hundred thousand."

"Innocent or guilty, Russell Welden would not consent to that, my dear," Mrs. Tanquer replied, in her usual quiet voice, although a bright spot gleamed in either cheek.

"Don't let him know. I'll get pappy to attend to it. My dear girls, money will do everything," and she beamed expansively on them all.

"Pardon me, not quite everything," Wickersham replied, coldly, and Ada, with unusual tact hastened to ask Elizabeth about a hospital in which she was interested, for the young heiress was as generous as commonplace, and had her inclinations been guided by a little breeding, she would have proven a most pleasant woman.

Knowing her husband's wishes with regard to her brother, Mrs. Tanquer was endeavoring to impart some of her own exquisite polish and poise to her future sister-in-law, but all who knew the dainty lady realized what a cross the daughter of the people with her crude ideas of culture, her utter lack of breeding and coarse tastes, must be to her. Not wishing to have her further commit herself, therefore, Mrs. Tanquer said, carelessly:

"Elizabeth, I think we had better ask Ada to excuse us and hurry, if we wish to reach Mrs. Helms' reception."

"All right, Maura. By the way, is John Helms going to defend Russell Welden?" turning to Wickersham.

That gentleman only bowed.

"What skins these lawyers are, anyway, for I know he believes him guilty, but guilty or not, I'm for him, for he always treated me nice when some others made fun of me, because I know I don't always do right. Yes, Maura, I'm coming. Good-by, Ada," kissing her hostess with genuine warmth. "Mr. Wickersham, tell Mr. Welden I'll do anything I can for him, and give him my respects. Yes, good-by, do come and see me, Ada, when you feel like coming out," and smiling and utterly unaware that she had overturned a chair and several stands in her outward progress, Miss Stoneborough sailed from the room, dragging her almost priceless furs along on the floor.

Wickersham was standing before the fire, his legs far apart and his hands in his pockets, looking down at the red embers, evidently in a deep study, when Ada turned from her departing guests, and not wishing to disturb him, she sank into the chair vacated by Mrs. Tanquer and watched him as he twisted up his ugly little face in numberless queer expressions, evidently endeavoring to bring to a logical conclusion a matter troubling him.

CHAPTER XV.

A log fell apart, and Wickersham started. Ada sat looking at him, rather wistfully. So had they sat together many an evening in camp, when she had felt she was growing to love him before Frank Welden had taken her heart by storm. All of the sorrow of the past few weeks seemed to float away, and she was her girlish self once more. Then Wickersham spoke:

"Thinking of what, Ada?"

She smiled, but said, reproachfully:

"How could you, Hal?"

"Could what?"

"Say what you did to Maura?"

"I'll tell you why, Ada, because I was wild to think of her indifference. Russell is going through an agony no one who does not know him and see him as I do, can realize. If that woman had never come across his path, he would be among us, his own jolly self."

"Hal, don't speak of Maura that way. None of us quite understand her, I am sure. You see I am such a little rattle-brained thing that I never could understand any one, but she has been very good to me, and you know introduced me to society and took the place of a mother and elder sister."

"I do not deny that Mrs. Tanquer is a most charming woman, but she is wonderfully self-possessed, too much so. I wanted, too, to see how she would take my suggestion relative to her connection with the case. You saw how utterly she disregarded it."

"Indeed, I did, and you don't know how thankful I was."

"The woman must have passed through a great deal to be able to overlook such a remark."

"No; she simply did not understand any personal application, that is all."

Wickersham raised his heavy eyebrows. "And you mean to say that you believe she does not connect herself with the matter?"

Ada looked down at her little hands, lying folded on her black dress and sighed.

"See here, Ada, you are a sensible girl. Does it stand to reason that she could remain ignorant with every one talking about it? Is it possible that she has no kind enemy to tell it to her, even if her own conscience did not accuse her?"

"Come here, Hal, and sit down," Ada said, quickly, motioning to the seat opposite. "And stop looking so fierce. Now, in the first place, you seem upset because Maura does not know that her name is connected with Russell's, and then you seem to hint something else. You must tell me just what you are thinking of, because you know I feel as though Russ were my brother now, and as Frank would have believed him guiltless and spent his life and fortune to clear him, so must I."

For a moment Wickersham's loyal heart was contracted. Could it be that the love Ada had felt for one cousin was transferred from him to the other, and that Russell would prefer the warm, healthy love of an unfettered girl to the platonic worship of an unattainable ideal. Then his common sense asserted itself, and he looked Ada right in the eyes, as he said, slowly:

"Ada Campbell, for some eight years now, I have known Mrs. Tanquer, ever since she came into our set upon her marriage. She never exactly attracted me, for there was something rather peculiar about her. She was only seventeen, or thereabouts, but there was a strange light in her eyes, and really she was just as funereal-looking then as now. Still, she did attract a number of the boys, and Russ among them. Things went on this way, until she went abroad a year ago. When she returned, Russell lost his head over her. We all saw it, and felt bad about it, for—well, you understand. A man of his character holds honor dearer than anything else. His friend's wife was safe, even from a glance. However, like the great sentimental baby he was, the chump treasures up some trifles he has picked up, belonging to Mrs. Tanquer."

Wickersham paused, looking again into the fire. His usual abruptness of speech seemed to have fallen away from him. He was thinking of another man who had more than one reminder of a month of happiness among the White Mountains.

"Well, Hal?"

"Every one knew of this infatuation of his, except her husband, brother and Frank. That is among us boys, although we held our tongues. Now, as luck would have it, Frank of all others stumbles upon these things, curses be upon them, and just at the moment when we were all half drunk; oh, yes, we all were, men always are at such functions, pulls them out, and the show begins."

"Yes, my dear Hal; but I know all this, except about the being half drunk part," said Ada, with a little laugh, trying to raise the frown on Wickersham's face, but he does not heed her pleasantry, but continues, resting his chin in his hand and staring at the embers as though to wrench some solution from them.

"This nonsense on his part brings into discussion a woman of blameless character and sets fire to a train of incidents which has already resulted in Russell's imprisonment and Frank's death, and things are getting worse every hour."

"Well, what is Maura's connection with it?"

"Ada, you women often have more to answer for than you think, careless, beautiful dainty creatures that you are. You take a man's heart in your little hands, turn it about, bruise it, then toss it aside and amuse yourselves with another." The man's eyes were on the fire, which, replenished with logs, was blazing away merrily, so he did not notice the pained, horrified expression which was creeping over Ada's delicate features, or the convulsive clenching of her hands.

"Yes; many a man has had his life ruined by one of you, but some men learn to hide their scars, others are too open-hearted to do so. Russell was one of the latter. He truly and honorably loved Mrs. Tanquer, and, while he would have guarded her honor with his life, he could not help showing his feelings. His secret could be read in his eyes whenever she appeared; in his voice when he addressed her, in a thousand and one ways. Don't tell me she did not know. A woman always knows when a man loves her."

"Some do not, Hal, indeed, they do not," whispered Ada. "They may appear cruel, but it is because they do not know or understand," and her voice broke a little, as she too, stared in the fire.

A light flashed in Wickersham's eyes, and he suddenly looked younger, but he said nothing, but, clasping his knee with his hands, leaned back in his chair and looked at the pretty picture before him; the golden-haired little figure, who was the perfection of daintiness from the bow in her hair to the tip of her satin slipper. Finding the silence oppressive, Ada again ventured:

"Hal, Maura did not know, I am sure."

"Say, Ada, you remember, in the evidence they said that the blood-stained packet was found in Russ' pocket when he was searched?"

"Yes; that's what bothers me."

"Me, too. Russell earnestly protests utter ignorance of it, saying he had not seen it from the time Frank put it in his pocket before us all until it was produced against him at the station. Russell would not lie to me and his lawyer. It would be rankest folly to do so, for we must have the truth to do any good whatever."

"How did it get there?"

"Ada, can I trust you fully? Yes; I know I can, and I want you to know. The night of the Clarinet Club ball, Russell and Mrs. Tanquer were in the library together."

"Suppose they were?" indignantly.

"I was passing the door, I saw her faint, tumble over in his arms."

"Why, Hal!"

"She did not act like a person in a faint. I was going to rush in, when I saw her slip her hand into his pocket. You know how white her fingers are? They seemed to stand out against his black coat, and the gems flashed as the fingers glided down. This was while he was supposing her to be in a faint."

"And then?"

"Well, she came to, that's all." Oh, loyal friend, who could see the gliding fingers and not the man's wild caresses.

"What do you mean by this?"

"Helms has said from the first, find out if any one put that compromising package in Russell's clothes, and I see a line of defense."

"Why, Hal!"

"Ada, your lover was killed by some one. My friend is wasting away in prison, accused most unjustly of the foulest crime which can be imputed to a man. You must help me in finding out just where the snarl is."

"How?"

"Talk with Mrs. Tanquer."

"Hal, she can know nothing."

"I saw her lying in my friend's arms, where she had thrown herself, pretending to be in a faint, and slipping her fingers into his pocket. In such grave matters as these Ada, we cannot stop at trifles. Will you help me?"

Poor Frank, passed from the happy life he had enjoyed so much! Light-hearted little Ada, essentially feminine. Needing a stronger will to guide, transferring her tender, delicate affections from one to the other without conscious effort.

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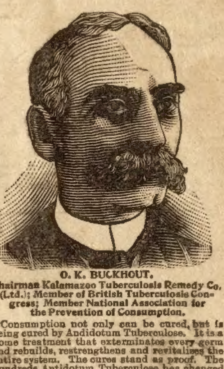

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JOKES AND

CHANGE

Quit Coffee and Got Well.

A woman's coffee experience is interesting. "For two weeks at a time I have taken no food but skim milk, for solid food would ferment and cause such a pressure of gas and such distress that I could hardly breathe at times, also excruciating pain and heart palpitation and all the time I was so nervous and restless.

"From childhood up I had been a coffee and tea drinker and for the past 20 years I have been trying different physicians but could get only temporary relief. Then I read an article telling how some one had been cured by leaving off coffee and drinking Postum and it seemed so pleasant just to read about good health I decided to try Postum in place of coffee.

"I made the change from coffee to Postum and such a change there is in me that I don't feel like the same person. We all found Postum delicious and like it better than coffee. My health now is wonderfully good.

"As soon as I made the shift from coffee to Postum I got better and now all of my troubles are gone. I am fleshy, my food assimilates, the pressure in the chest and palpitation are all gone, my bowels are regular, have no more stomach trouble and my headaches are gone. Remember I did not use medicines at all—just left off coffee and drank Postum steadily." Name given by Postum Co., Battle Creek, Mich.

Send to the Co. for particulars by mail of extension of time on the $7,500.00 cooks contest for 735 money prizes.

Found an Angel.

Merchant—I am sorry to lose Miss Pinkie's services, but what must be must. May I ask how it is that a wealthy young man like you should have chosen a shop-girl to share your fortune?

De Rich—Three or four of my family made unhappy marriages, and I vowed that I'd never wed a woman who wasn't a born angel, and I know Miss Pinkie is. I have heard three different shopping ladies speak well of her.

A Free Kidney Remedy.

Dr. D. A. Williams, East Hampton, Conn., says if any sufferer from Kidney and Bladder disease will send him their address he will mail them, free of all cost, some of the remedy they are looking for—the ONE that will cure them.

Cold Comfort.

Fussy Passenger—Why does your company insist that passengers must purchase tickets before entering the train? Are they afraid that, if we pay money to you, that you will steal it?

Conductor (with dignity)—Certainly not. They are afraid the train may run off the track before I can get around.

Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup for Children teething, softens the gums, reduces inflammation, allays pain, cures wind colic, 25 cents a bottle.

A Long-Felt Want.

Inventor—I have a machine that will make our fortune now. It's a slot machine with a new attachment. All I want is money to set up a lot of 'em along Wall Street.

Capitalist—But what does it do?

Inventor—When a man loses money, all he has to do is to back up to the machine, drop a nickel in the slot, and it will kick him.

An Average Portrait.

Artist (angrily)—Why did you sky my "Portrait of a Gentleman?" Can't see it without a stepladder.

Hanging Committeeman—Very sorry; but, you see, he looks like the sort of a person who would feel more comfortable up there than down on a level with ordinary people.

Worth Knowing.

Tramp—Have you any broken china plates that you would like mended?

Housekeeper—Indeed, I have. Do you use cement?

Tramp—No, mum; if you'll hand me a broken plate, with a piece of pie on it, I'll show you how I manage.

Housekeeper—Well, it's worth knowing. Here.

Tramp—Thank ye, mum. All you have to do is just to take the pie in your hand this way, mum, and then it don't matter about the plate, mum.

A Conscientious Barkeeper.

Policeman—You say you always refuse to sell a man liquor after he has had as much as is good for him?

Bartender—That's my rule. When he begins to see double, I bounce him.

Policeman—An' a good rule it is. But how do you know when he begins to see double?

Bartender—When he hands me five cents for a ten-cent drink and insists that he paid me ten.

Worth the Money.

Business Man (looking for office room)—The rooms in this building are small, miserably ventilated, and inconvenient in every way—and yet the rent is enormous.

Agent—You live in the suburbs, don't you?

Business Man—Yes.

Agent—Well, sir, this building is right next door to an intelligence office.

Right in His Line.

Tramp—Please, mum, d'ye wanter buy anything in my line?

Housekeeper—Your line, eh? You don't mean to say you are trying to earn an honest living at last?

Tramp—Yes'm.

Housekeeper—Well, I declare! What are you selling?

Tramp—Dog-chains, mum.

Behind the Times.

Caller—You have changed to homeopathy, I see.

Fair Invalid—Yes; the homeopathic doctors give their medicines in little pellets, while the allopaths nearly always order their dose by the spoonful—and spoons are dreadfully out of fashion.

No Credentials Needed.

Maid—Gentleman in the parlor wants to see you, ma'am.

Mrs. De Avnoo—A gentleman?

Maid—Oh, yes, ma'am, he's a real gentleman. He chucked me under the chin, ma'am.

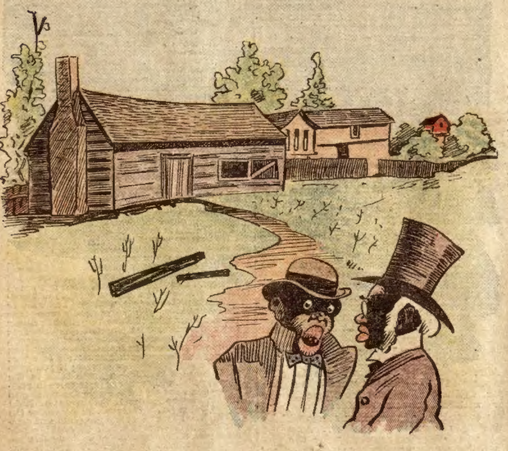
A Backwoods Product.

Mrs. De Style—I never saw such a countrified thing as that Mrs. Nextdoor.

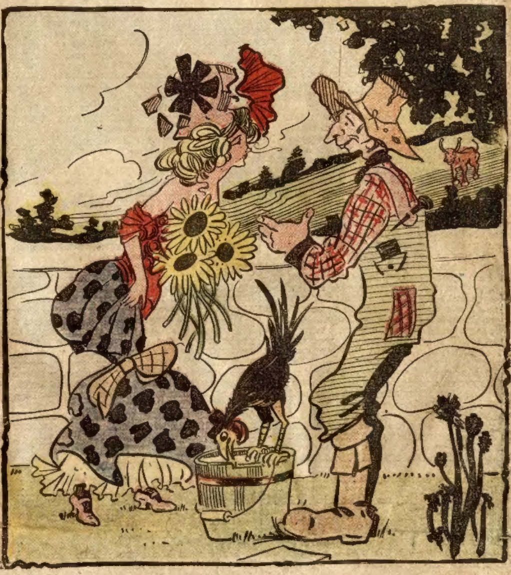
Mr. De Style—What's the matter with her?

Mrs. De Style—She always dresses according to the weather.

LOST HIS SHARE.



"We collected a hundred dollars at our church last Sunday for the heathen."
"Dat's jes' mah luck. I done got converted two weeks ago."



Mrs. Townley—How do you catch the cows when you want to milk them?
Clovertopp—Jus' go down to the railway station and git the loan of a cow-catcher off one of the engines.

A Thoughtful Landlord.

A certain gentleman has his room on the sixth floor of a hotel. One morning he came down unexpectedly and found the landlord in the act of opening a telegram addressed to him.

"What do you mean by opening my telegram?" he demanded of the landlord.

"Oh," the unabashed individual answered, "you see, I wanted to know if it was worth sending up six floors, or if it would wait till you came down."

True Independence.

Young Lady—I am tired of living on my relatives, and want to be independent.

Employment Agent—I might get you a place in a store.

Young Lady—That won't do. I'd be under some one's orders continually. I want to be independent of everything and everybody.

Employment Agent—Ah, I see. I'll get you a place as cook.

A Secret Worth Keeping.

Wife—Oh, I've found out the awfullest thing. Mrs. Wayupp's daughter is quietly preparing to elope with her fiance, instead of waiting another year, as she promised. I must run right over and warn Mrs. Wayupp.

Husband—For mercy's sake, don't say a word. If they elope, we won't have to give them any wedding presents.

Law as She Is Worked.

Prison Visitor—What terrible crime has this man committed?

Jailer—He has done nothing. He merely happened to be passing when Tough Jim tried to kill a man, and he is held as a witness.

Visitor—Where is Tough Jim?

Jailer—He is out on bail.

Unplayed Plays.

Star—Your play won't do. It's too bright, too witty, too full of literary excellence.

Dramatist—Is that an objection?

Star—Certainly. Do you suppose I want the public to forget about me and begin calling for the author?

A Hopeless Case.

Jinks—What a hopeless Anglomaniac Biffkins has become.

Binks—He has?

Jinks—I saw him at the club last night laughing over London Punch.

The Place for Fits.

A shoemaker has this card in his window: "Any respectable man, woman or child can have a fit in this shop."

Home-Made Bread.

Husband—And so you made this bread yourself? It is remarkable.

Young Wife—It's real good, isn't it? But it was such a trouble. I had to watch it constantly to keep it from burning.

Husband—Was that the only trouble?

Young Wife—Of course. I got the dough from the baker's.

Had Studied His Tastes.

Miss Brightlie—Oh, Mr. Search, there's a young lady here tonight I know you will like.

Mr. Search—I feel extremely flattered to find that you have made such a close study of my tastes. Please describe her.

Miss Brightlie—She's worth a million.

A Sure Thing.

Binkers—This life insurance idea is good enough if a man dies young, but suppose I should live thirty or forty years longer—I'd be terribly out of pocket.

Agent—No danger of that, sir. You'll soon kill yourself working to pay the premiums.

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Circumstances Alter Cases.

"The boys are throwing stones at a poor peddler."

"Outrageous!"

"That's what I think."

"Whose boys are they?"

"Yours."

"Oh, well, boys will be boys. Let the children play."

A Deep-Laid Scheme.

First Roomer—Say, are you in love with our landlady's daughter?

Second Roomer—Indeed, I'm not.

First Roomer—Then, why do you sit in the parlor every night and keep her playing on that piano?

Second Roomer—Hist! Don't say a word. I'm in hopes she'll break it.

Western Dentistry.

There is need of a good dentist in this town just at present, but he should understand the situation before he opens shop. The patient always sits in the chair with a gun in his hand, and at the first twinge of pain he begins to shoot. It's painless dentistry or a painless death to the dentist. —Arizona Kicker.

Mastered the Subject.

Farmer Meadow—What's this oriental occultism the papers are talking about?

Mrs. Meadow (a seminary graduate)—Haven't you carried a horse chestnut for years to keep off rheumatism?

Farmer Meadow—Yes.

Mrs. Meadow—That's occultism.

The Age of Science.

Lady (a few years hence)—Mercy! What is wanted?

Policeman—It's reported at th' station that you've got a cold. Colds is contagious, and the ambulance is here to rush you around to the Cough Pesthouse. Step lively now.

Very Becoming.

Husband—Do you think my full beard is an improvement?

Wife—How much does it save you a week?

Husband—About a dollar.

Wife—Yes; it's an improvement.

Where the Money Goes.

Husband—What did you do with the money you saved on coal during the mild weather last winter?

Wife—I have put it away to pay the extra charges of the iceman on account of the mild weather last winter.

It's Bound to Come.

"Of course," said the optimist, "if a man gets into the habit of hunting trouble he's sure to find it."

"Yes," replied the pessimist, "and if he's so lazy that he always tries to avoid it, it will find him. So what's the difference?"

Anything to Oblige.

She (coyly)—What would you do if I refused to become your wife?

He—Oh, I'd do the best I could for you by trying to persuade some other fellow to marry you.

Legal Satisfaction.

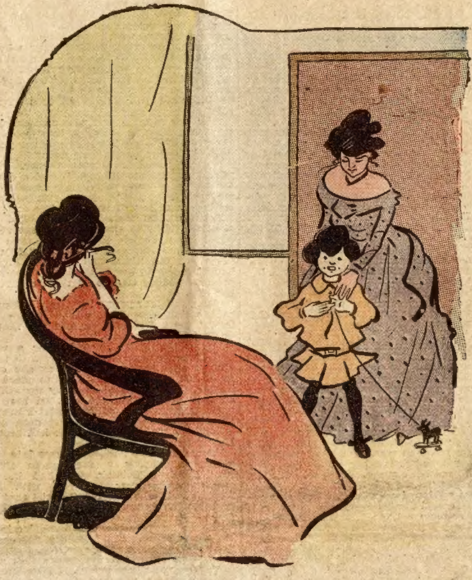
"How did you come out with your lawsuit?"

"I won it."

"Get damages?"

"Sure. I got almost enough to pay my lawyer."

HELPFUL HERBERT.



"Herbert, what is this I hear about you pulling up all the flowers?"

"Why, Mamma, I heard Papa say last night that they weren't coming up as fast as they ought to."

Patriotic Resentment.

Mr. Knowsome—Those are copies of the ships in which Columbus sailed from Spain to discover America.

Mr. Hojack—Go on! You'll never make me believe that any foreigner discovered our great country.

Good Enough to Hang.

Husband—Those plaques you have bought are miserable daubs. No artist ever painted them.

Wife—Oh, I did not purchase them for table use. They are only to hang up.

The Seeming Justice of It.

"Things are wrong," remarked the Observer of Events and Things, "when a reputable physician has to pay money for a certificate to practice, and a 14-year-old girl with a new piano doesn't."

Aspersing Jones' Note.

"I say, Jones," said Smith, "what did you give for that horse?"

"My note," replied Jones.

"Well," rejoined Smith, "you certainly got a bargain."

No Danger of a Fall.

Sharpe—Yes; Parke invented the safest airship ever heard of.

Whealton—But it refused to fly. You couldn't go up on it.

Sharpe—That's why I say it was the safest.

The Beggar's Advice.

Smith (seeing beggar bearing sign reading, "Deaf and Dumb")—I'd like to help this poor fellow, but I don't know how to tell whether he is really deaf and dumb.

Beggar (softly)—Read the sign, mister; read the sign.

He Wasn't In It.

Tom—No; I shall not marry Miss Stringem. She's made up too much to suit me.

Jack—Is that so?

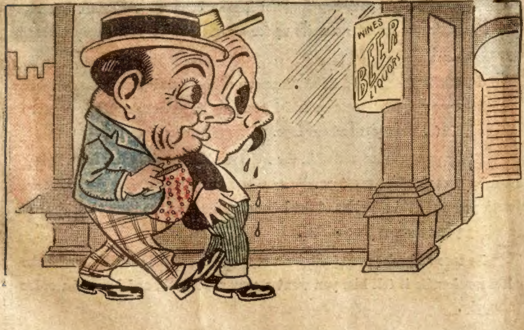
Tom—Yes. Why, the other evening when I proposed to her I discovered that even her mind was made up.

Cause of the Mirth.

"Bridget," said Mrs. Hyflyte, "your lady friend mustn't stay so late hereafter. Her uproarious laughter woke me up at one o'clock this morning."

"Yis, mum; I was tellin' her about how you tried to make cake wan day."

THEY WERE TRIPLETS.



Old Pop—So you are a father, eh? I'll drink a glass of wine to the health of the new arrival.

Newpop (sadly)—Drink three.

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Or, The Perils of Beauty and Poverty.

By MARO O. ROLFE, Author of "Sadie, the Sewing Girl," "A Working Girl's Fate," "The Battle for Bread," Etc., Etc.

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CHAPTER XVII.

A PEREMPTORY MESSAGE.

There ensued, at the lawyer's office a very satisfactory interview between Selkirk and Fanny and Bennie Norton, in which plans were laid, through the working out of which Selkirk confidently expected to avenge Fanny's wrongs and the brutal indignities that had been visited on her mother and little brother, to secure for them ample financial recompense for all their troubles, and to bring to rigid justice those, from the highest to the lowest, who had sought the girl's discomfiture.

"Now, Miss Norton," said Selkirk, "I advise you to go home and comfort and reassure your mother. If I have my way, and I warn you that I do, that is, usually, you're going to see better times in the near future than you have had lately."

"But will it be safe for her to go?" asked Bennie. "Besides—about the better times—she's lost her place at the store, and Ma has to have her help to get along at all."

"You will soon have all the money you will need to use for some time," replied Selkirk, "and it will come out of the well-filled wallet of Mr. Max Shellbarger, and it will rightly belong to you, so you need not worry about your daily needs. As to her going home, it will be perfectly safe. I shall take means at once to end this persecution of her, and you may be certain that they will be effectual. I shall look out for you, Miss Norton," he added, flushing slightly, "that is, if you will permit me. Now, go straight to your mother—she needs you and you need her. I suppose Bennie will stay here, as he was to begin with me this morning. He's a pretty bright lad and I may have use for him in this very business."

"I thank you, Mr. Selkirk," said Fanny, giving the young lawyer a gentle hand pressure that sent the red blood to his face and brow, where it glowed as if it might have been a reflection of the rosy blush that tinted her own peachy cheeks. "Oh, Mr. Selkirk, I cannot tell you how much I thank you, and Mamma will want to thank you personally for all that you are doing for her and hers."

"I hope she will have an opportunity to do so, for I am certain that the commendation of the mother of such good children as Bennie and yourself would fall on me like a blessing. My mother died when I was only a child, and every motherly woman that I have known at any time in my life has, unwittingly, of course, made me heart-hungry."

"How sad that must be for you, Mr. Selkirk," put in Bennie, in earnest, boyish sympathy, "but there's one thing—you've shown yourself a brother to me, sir, and you're being good to Fanny, and we'll be awful willin' to let our mother be a mother to you if you'd want her to be, wouldn't we, Fanny?"

Fanny reddened again and Selkirk half-buried his face in a book and laughed just a little uncomfortably.

"We'll have to leave that to Mother and Mr. Selkirk, I guess, Bennie," Fanny said nervously. "Good-by, Mr. Selkirk."

The lawyer conducted Fanny to the door and bowed her out with courtly grace, then turned to Bennie and said, sharply:

"Young man, if you ever expect to succeed at the bar, you'll have to cultivate a little more diplomacy, especially in your speech."

"I don't know what I've said, Mr. Selkirk," answered the boy, a bit nettled, "that was nondiplomatical, for I mean everything I say from the ground up and from my heart out to the rim of space."

"That's just what I was thinking of," was Selkirk's dry response, "but maybe you're better, after all, than you would be if you were a more accomplished diplomat. A diplomat, my boy, has to be a trimmer, and I hate a trimmer, and so does God. Now, I am going to write a letter, and I shall want you to take it to Mr. Max Shellbarger, at his private office in the store of Hiney, Shellbarger, and Deppenheimer."

"I'm afraid I might do something nondiplomatical if I should get face to face with Shellbarger," said Bennie.

"What are you afraid you might do?"

"I'd be likely to jounce 'im, sir."

"Are you a scrapper, Bennie?" asked Selkirk, with a laugh.

"Well, no gang o' tough kids has ever been able to make me go round the block, and it's been tried more than once."

"Now, if you see Shellbarger, he won't suspect that you're Fanny's brother if you don't tell him that you are, and for her sake you must try to restrain your pugilistic propensity; we want to protect her from any further trouble, you know," admonished Selkirk, thinking about the letter that he meant to write to Shellbarger.

Fifteen minutes later Bennie stood before Ducey Damm, Shellbarger's private secretary and advertising manager for Hiney, Shellbarger and Deppenheimer, in the anteroom to the manager's private office. As has been implied, Shellbarger had been only too glad to receive Damm in a tolerant spirit when the latter had come down this morning. Things had been going very much awry with Shellbarger. His plans had miscarried terribly, and he was in no pleasant frame of mind, but he thought he had trouble enough without renewing hostilities with Damm.

"I want to see Mr. Shellbarger," said the boy.

"Won't I do?" asked the fat manager's skinny confidential man.

"If you're Mr. Shellbarger, you will."

"But I'm not."

"Then you won't do."

"But I'm his private secretary."

"Private secretaries don't go with me this morning," declared Bennie.

"Oh, they don't, eh? Why is that?"

"'Cause I'm looking for big game."

"Do you know what happened to a boy that went after big game once on a time?" asked Damm, sarcastically. "I'm going to tell you that he went up against a bear and one of the parties to the controversy was eaten whole, and it wasn't the bear."

"And I'm going to tell you," retorted Bennie, "that there ain't any game in this joint too big or too tough for me to tackle. And then I'm going to warn you that some day you may be glad it's big game I'm after here and not little game. Now, trot out Mr. Shellbarger."

Damm reddened angrily, but made no reply. He called Shellbarger, who came from the inner room a little impatiently.

"And am I to be bothered for every kid that comes in here with a letter?" he asked, gutturally.

"Not for every kid, sir, but just when the real thing arrives," Bennie shot at the puffing manager. "I'm the real thing, and I've just got in. Read this."

The boy thrust a letter in the merchant's hand and the latter tore it open, read very hastily a brief communication that Selkirk had enclosed in it, then sank half staggering into a convenient chair.

"Continue your persecution of Miss Norton at your peril," he had read. "Make an appointment to visit me at my office soon. Your game is up."

"Tell the gentleman I will see him at four," said Shellbarger, after some thinking.

CHAPTER XVIII.

A CHAMPION AND A SUITOR.

Shellbarger now sent once more for Alderman Hinkbath and instructed that bestial-looking and gorgeously-clad misrepresentative of the people to see Police Captain McToucher and the justice of the peace and have all action against Fanny Norton brought to a dead stop at once.

The alderman regarded him curiously, for he had to take note of Shellbarger's evident perturbation, but asked no questions. As he had no wish in any such matter beyond pleasing the "boss" to the extent of his ability, it was all one to him whether he sent the human bloodhounds at his beck and call to pursue and torture a good woman and her children or called them off, so he said, blandly:

"It shall be as you say, Mr. Shellbarger. Everythin' shall be dropped as soon as word can go along the line."

"You want to lose no time in sending it along, then," said Shellbarger, with unpleasant earnestness. "There's no time for fooling. Who know what that constable and policeman may be up to this morning before they get the signal to take to the woods?"

Shellbarger's apprehension was not groundless. He knew something of the bulldog tenacity, something of the vengeful nature of Constable Robustus Hagins, and was sure that diligent doer of high-handed villainy would start in to make this a busy day for himself and the innocent objects of his baffled anger. As a matter of fact, Hagins had early stationed himself in a low saloon diagonally across the street from the entrance to the apartment building in which the Nortons lived to watch for Fanny's return. Consequently he was not in communication with any emissary of Alderman Hinkbath's and could not be notified of Shellbarger's change of front and of plan. So, when he saw Fanny enter the building he followed her up to the Norton home and promptly arrested her.

"You'll not get away so 'asy this time," he gritted out through his set teeth. "You understand it's come along or get the nippers."

"You're making a mistake," said Fanny, calmly, for she now had little fear of Hagins or of what he might do. "If you will go with me to a 'phone, I can convince you of it, I think."

"I'll go wit' yez to no 'phone," declared Hagins, "but yez go wid me to a good safe place, I'm thinkin', an' ye'll stay there as long as any one wants to kape yez there."

It was in vain that Fanny and Mrs. Norton tried to reason with him. He dragged the girl down the stairs and out onto the street, and started to force her along to a street car that was standing at a nearby corner.

"Help! help!" she called out loudly, trying to attract the attention of some friend or acquaintance who might be in the vicinity. Her mother followed her down, hoping at the nearest drugstore to be able to telephone to Percival Selkirk. Seeing how roughly Fanny was being handled by Hagins, she joined in her daughter's resonant appeal for assistance.

When Constable Hagins was dragging Fanny by the shoulders to the car, whose clanging bell announced that its departure was imminent, he received an unexpected check that he was destined to remember for many a day. It came in the form of a stunning blow right between the eyes that stretched him out on the ground.

The man who had laid him low helped Fanny to her feet and then confronted Hagins, every muscle quivering with anger, his eyes blazing with indignation.

"Brute!" he cried, seizing Hagins by the throat and shaking him until his teeth cut his lips and he was getting black in the face. "What do you mean by treating this girl in the way you're doing? Let her go or I'll maul you within an inch of your life."

"I'm a constable and was arristin' her," explained Hagins. "Yez is interferin5 wit' the law an' it's the law I'll be afther puttin' onto yez. Out av me way now!"

"Liar!" cried Fanny's rescuer. "Last night you told me the girl was your daughter and you were taking her home to her mother. Now, you big brute, you go on and let her be or it will be the worse for you."

For the first time Fanny looked the stranger fairly in the eyes, and she recognized the youngish, kindly-faced man who had tried to interfere in her behalf in the drugstore the night before, when Hagins had been taking her to the lonely two-story prison building on one of the outskirts of the city.

"Run, my dear young lady, run!" the man said, warningly. "Get away, where this fellow can't find you. I will see that he don't follow you now."

Fanny thanked him and after a whispered word to her mother hurried to the L station and went as quickly as she could to Amber. When Hagins tried to chase her, he was again knocked down by the athletic stranger, and when he got on his feet again he was quite willing to let Fanny go where she would; for he had been overtaken by a messenger boy who had brought him orders to drop the case.

Bennie went to Amber's rooms late that afternoon, bearing a message to Fanny from Percival Selkirk, who had been in communication over the wire with Mrs. Norton, and who advised the girl that she could positively now go home again without fear of being further molested.

"He wants you to come to the office in the morning, Fanny," added Bennie. "He wants you to bring some witnesses, too, that'll be able to testify about the games that were put up on you at the store. If Miss Durand knows anything about it, she'd better come, too, I guess."

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"You'll go, won't you, Amber?" said Fanny, as she was about to set out again for home. "I'm anxious for you to get acquainted with Mr. Selkirk. I think he's awfully nice."

"Oh, is he?" asked Amber, dryly. "Well, I'll go with you."

Late that evening there was a caller at the humble and now sadly dilapidated home of the Nortons. He was ushered in by Mrs. Bedalia O'Flarrity, who in his very presence, announced him thus:

"A little skilliton sheeny that walks like a spider, to see yez, Miss Fanny, an' oxsadiugly bad 'cess to him, I say."

It was Ducey Damm, who came in and bowed low to Fanny and to her mother, and accepted a seat on a chair that Bennie pushed toward him.

"I'm sure you need a friend, Miss Norton," he said, insinuatingly. "I have come to offer my services in that capacity. May I hope that you will accept me?"

"I do not know that I need you, Mr. Damm," answered Fanny. "My troubles are about over, I believe. Please let me thank you for your assistance to Amber and myself in making our escape from the private office yesterday morning and for your kind offer of friendship now."

"I have come to offer you more than friendship, Miss Norton. Before your family I declare my love for you, and ask you to be my wife. I can make a nice living for you, for I'm a good saver as well as a good earner. What do you say?"

"I shall have to decline you with thanks, Mr. Damm."

CHAPTER XIX.

THE END OF THE STORY.

Thus curtly, very firmly, Fanny Norton dismissed the suit of Ducey Damm, and when he had gone she retired and slept the sleep of the good and the tired till her mother called her to breakfast next morning. Having breakfasted, she went with Bennie downtown, and at Dearborn and Monroe streets met Amber Durand by appointment. Amber treated the proposal of marriage that Damm had made to Fanny as a good joke.

"Perhaps it's no joke to him," suggested Fanny.

No true woman can be utterly heartless in her consideration of such a matter.

Mr. Selkirk was awaiting their appearance and greeted them with cordial warmth. He had much to tell Fanny. A very important part of his communication to her consisted in paying over to her a large bunch of banknotes that Shellbarger had handed him in settlement of all claims against him on account of his dastardly plot against Fanny's peace and honor.

"I couldn't have expected more in a financial way, Mr. Selkirk," said the girl, thoughtfully, "but no amount of money ought to exempt such a wretch as Shellbarger from punishment. Do you think so? Money is little to him and he will go on trying to take advantage of good girls as he tried to do of me and as he once tried to do of my friend here." She nodded toward Amber. "Besides, his money is dirty money—it is what Mother calls filthy lucre."

"He owed it all to you richly enough, Miss Norton," said the lawyer. "Besides, the payment of this sum by him is no part at all of his punishment—it is a simple act of justice to you. His offense against you and others temporarily at his mercy is only a fraction of his ill-doing. He has earned public detestation in more ways than one. To expose him as he deserves would, indirectly, bring discredit on his excellent partners, Messrs. Hiney and Deppenheimer. I have so managed matters, since I saw you last, that Hiney and Deppenheimer have demanded that Shellbarger sell his interest in The Cornucopia to them and leave the country, never to return. His downfall will bring others tumbling. His reign as a political boss is at an end, and some of the most disreputable features of our municipal government can now be wiped out. I think it will be better to have this man out of Chicago with the fear of the prison to keep him away, than to shut him up for a time and then have him here, a returned convict with nothing to lose and everything to gain by the perpetration of any villainy he may be ingenious enough to invent and powerful enough with lesser crooks to put in operation. Now, you can see that your whole case is disposed of, Miss Norton, except so far as it affects Constable Robustus Hagins."

"Well," said Amber, "there's surely something coming to that brute."

"And he's likely to get some of it before night," put in Selkirk.

"How?"

"His official commission will be taken away from him. That in itself is a good deal of punishment to a fellow like Hagins, who has held some petty office so long that he doesn't know how to make a living without it."

"But he ought to get it good and hard for beating Mrs. Norton and Bennie as he did and for being so brutal to Fanny," persisted Amber.

"He got it just that way yesterday," said Fanny.

"He did?" spoke Selkirk, questioningly.

"Yes that man that interfered for me knocked him down twice," said Fanny, laughing. "I shouldn't want to be struck quite as hard as he was."

"Who is that man?" asked Amber. "If I were in your place I'd want to thank him good and plenty."

"And so I do," said Fanny. "He's a modest hero, I think, for he didn't give his name to Mamma, which he could have done if he had wanted to after I left the place and the disturbance was at an end."

"I expect that man here soon," said Selkirk.

"You do?" exclaimed Fanny.

"Yes."

"Then you know his name?"

"I do not; but I have got trace of him and have sent for him to go with me to the Mayor to lodge complaint against Constable Robustus Hagins, Policeman McShane, a police captain and other officials who long have been at Shellbarger's beck and call. I think he will be in this morning some time. Perhaps this is the gentleman now."

Fanny turned toward the door and saw her deliverer and advanced toward him with a glad cry.

"Oh, sir, I want to thank you!" she cried. "I want to thank you!"

She saw a smile of recognition wreathe the man's lips, then she saw his face suddenly white and he stopped and stood before her as might have stood a man who had been instantly turned to marble. His gaze was fixed and staring and she saw that it was centered not on her but on something behind her. While she was regarding him in speechless wonder at the seemingly inexplicable change that had come over him, she heard a low cry of surprise, almost of horror, and then Selkirk said:

"Bennie, bring a glass of water. Miss Durand, don't you see, has fainted."

Fanny went to Amber, who was now lying senseless on the floor, and took the glass of water that Bennie brought and poured some of it between her unconscious friend's lips and sprinkled some of it over her bloodless face.

The stranger had now controlled himself somewhat, and he came into the inner office and as Amber opened her eyes he raised her in his arms and held her with her head pillowed on his bosom.

"Amber!" he whispered. "It is I—Walter—Walter Ray. Mr. Shellbarger wrote me that you were dead. When I got back to the city your family had gone and the neighbors told me that your mother had died soon after her daughter. I believed what I had heard and have mourned for you ever since. Explain this mystery."

"It was my sister who died," said Amber, permitting him to help her to a seat on a chair. "You and the neighbors made a mess of that, but I do not wonder at your misunderstanding, considering that Shellbarger had already informed you that I had died. He told me that word had been sent me through him, and he pretended to be trying to break the sad news to me very gently, that you had died on voyage home from the Philippines and had been buried at sea. I never heard from you, and as I knew of no reason why I should doubt his story, I have believed it till now. Oh, Wal-

(Continued on page fifteen.)

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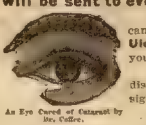

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Boys and Girls
Corner

Adrift on a Junk; Or, Boy Sailors of the China Sea.

By St. George Rathborne.

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CHAPTER I.

JULIAN MAKES FRIENDS IN OLD HONG-HONG.

A bright-faced, prepossessing sailor lad of about seventeen, whose appearance somehow stamped him as one born under the protecting folds of Old Glory, was sprawled upon a rock near the crest of the famous hill known as "Topside," or the "Peak," and overlooking one of the most charming scenes in the whole world—the harbor of Hong-Kong.

At his feet lay the city locally known as Victoria, and around him, on the noble elevation, clustered scores of beautiful European dwellings, fashioned mostly after the East Indian bungalow type.

Still, to one who had the blood of New Bedford sailors in his veins, the panorama of the harbor far eclipsed all else—and, indeed, it presented many unique points of interest with the blue water rippled by the passing breeze stealing in from the mysterious China Sea, home of romance and strange happenings—with scores of merchant vessels and grim men-o'-war anchored in the offing or made fast to the docks with stout hawsers, and mingled with the foreign shipping hundreds of piratical-looking junks and dilapidated sampans could be seen.

These houses on the Peak, as history has attested, built of brick and stone as they are, have been "cemented with blood," since every pound of material was transported up the steep winding road on human shoulders. Even as young Julian Roxbury lay there at his ease, the tortuous trail near by was thronged with burden-bearers, all headed upward, coolies, men and children, each with a staggering load, machines of labor, [illegible] accustomed to suffering and seldom straightening, though at midday with the advent of the chow-chow man, the [illegible] his [illegible] dropped and tongues loosened as the chopsticks clattered, with a result that might have even shamed the confusion said to exist at the historical Tower of Babel.

While familiar with life on the sea ever since his first fishing trip to the Banks as a very small "shaver," Julian had not launched forth upon the vast ocean through love for the calling of a sailor; nor was the usual boyish longing to gaze upon strange foreign ports wholly answerable for his pilgrimage.

A yearning that had long been fought off, but which finally became irresistible, took possession of him heart and soul—a desire to discover some trace of a dearly-loved father, once commander of a vessel that had mysteriously disappeared in these dangerous seas, was the mainspring that urged him to give up a comfortable home, part from weeping mother and sisters, and set out boldly to investigate a remarkable rumor that had been brought home by a fellow townsman, an ancient mariner fresh from the tropical land of the White Elephant, Siam.

Lack of means had compelled the young fellow to go before the mast, so that he had virtually worked his way out to Hong-Kong, suffering considerably from the brutish instincts of a Yankee skipper whom he was pleased to leave in the lurch at Nagasaka, Japan, coming the rest of the way on a native vessel, and picking up considerable knowledge concerning these slant-eyed people of the Mongolian races—information that might sooner or later prove valuable to one who designed to do more or less prowling about the shores of the great China Sea.

Stranded in Hong-Kong, he had, with the usual Yankee aggressiveness, applied himself to the task of securing means wherewith his present wants could be supplied, until such time as he found a chance to embark on some vessel bound along the coast toward Singapore—somewhere in that stretch of waters he believed there lay an island used more or less as a rendezvous by the native yellow-skinned buccaneers, whose tactics differed vastly from those bold and bloody ways of Captain Kidd and his merry men, though the net results might seem just as disastrous to unfortunate craft that happened to fall into their unscrupulous hands—among these outcasts and nomads he had been informed a few prisoners were kept, one of whom answered in many ways the description of his father, so that his eagerness to reach some conclusion in the matter could be easily understood.

Julian looked to see whether any new ships had come into port since his last survey of the previous day, and what chance they appeared to offer to a fellow of his size who cuddled such a strange ambition to his heart.

The result was hardly satisfying, though he rather fancied the looks of a blunt-nosed brig with patched sails that seemed to bear the marks of a trader, if his judgment were worth anything.

Our young friend from Connecticut was not the first, by long odds, to make use of the Peak as an observatory—in years long since passed, before the Cross of St George had ever been raised above Hong-Kong, the cruel pirates of the China Sea sighted their intended prey from this lofty height, and signaled the fleet of war junks lying in the harbor below, like a pack of sea-hounds, impatient to slip the leash.

Satisfied at length with his observations, and having marked the position of the dingy brig in his mind, so that he could find her easily when upon the quay, Julian abandoned his perch, sauntered over to the tramcar that descended the hill, and half an hour later was in the native quarters of the Oriental city.

Here the pig-tailed Celestials fairly seethed—beyond the European quarter one might ride for a mile without meeting ten foreigners, through streets teeming with almond-eyed Mongols, going about their business, as has been remarked by one traveler of renown, "with a preposterous seriousness that only gives way to hilarity at the occasional spectacle of some misfortune to a fellow;" which proves how prone all flesh is to a keen sense of the ridiculous.

The shops were open, with the gaudy wares exposed—there were native industries, the gorgeous garments of the upper classes, and the ordinary throngs of jostling porters and wayfarers, an everlasting procession of sedan-chairs and jinrickishas, looking exceedingly picturesque in their wicker hats, and carrying the inevitable bamboo, without which they would be utterly useless as burden bearers.

Many things about this region took the eye of the youngster, who had never been further than Cuba on a cruise—he liked to loiter about the shops, and utilize his smattering of the Chinese tongue to learn what the general talk was all about—perhaps in his sanguine [illegible] way he hoped that some time he might be able to pick up certain information concerning the strange errand that had coaxed him from his New England home, just as if the disappearance of one sailor captain or the ship for that matter could interest the gossiping tongues of Hong-Kong Celestials, especially when the affair had occurred some years in the past.

A fortnight had thus passed, and he was growing impatient to be on his pilgrimage again, since he had not come thus far to simply take his ease [illegible] chattering [illegible].

As the afternoon [illegible] his way down toward the quays [illegible] with the intention of finding out something about the brig that had attracted his attention; though so many disappointments began to make him less sanguine than he had been in the start.

Here were sailors' boarding-houses with the inevitable land-sharks running them that are to be found in every seaport in the world—Julian had a cubby-hole of a den in one of the same, and daily ran the gauntlet of the "press-gang," as he joyously styled the fellows who sought to influence men to ship with certain captains, and, it was hinted, sometimes even went to extreme measures in order to win the fat fee offered for A B seamen delivered on board.

Those who landed from many of the vessels were compelled to pass through this unsavory section, and during his stay Julian had been a witness to several scenes of violence that disgusted him, making his Yankee blood fairly boil, for he was a believer in fair play and that every man had certain rights which others should be made to respect.

In truth, our young friend inherited some of the dash and spirit that his ancestors had shown a century and more gone by, when King George attempted to carry measures with too high a hand to suit the people of His Majesty's American colonies—one of the most successful blockade-runners of the time, who harried the British fleet week in and week out, had been closely connected with the Roxburys of New Bedford.

As usual, there was something stirring in this delectable quarter about the time he drew up in front of his lodgings—though bored at a repetition of such unsavory antics on the part of lounging sailors and rascally representatives of all nations, Julian turned aside to see what it was all about, never dreaming what an influence upon his whole future this simple act of curiosity would prove.

As usual a motley crowd surged this way and that, loud voices sounded, and even before arriving on the scene of action Julian knew that an over-indulgence in strong drink must be the main cause of the disturbance, since under its influence men always go about like roaring lions, seeking trouble.

Somewhat to his surprise he discovered a stocky lad, with a rough shock of tawny hair that stood out like the mane of an African king of beasts, actually dancing a sailor's hornpipe in front of a hulking big seaman, whose clumsy though vicious defense against his mosquito-like antagonist told of too frequent potations in the vile dens that always lie open for the unwary feet of poor Jack ashore, just as the web of the spider catches the unsuspicious fly.

The youngster was fairly up in the manly art of self-defense, to judge from his promptness in taking advantage of each and every opening offered; and somehow Julian guessed with his Yankee propensity that he must hail from the tight little island upon whose possessions the sun never sets.

It was a pretty fair random shot, too, as he discovered later on when his acquaintance with valiant Bobby Kettles waxed warmer.

Naturally his sympathies instantly went out to a fellow in distress, for the bully seemed to have numerous cronies in the tough crowd; and since it would hardly be politic or safe to draw up alongside and dare the whole bunch to deadly battle, Julian cudgeled his brain to discover some plan whereby he might succeed in drawing the little bantam off, and in other words, effecting what historians delight in calling a "masterly retreat."

It appeared that fortune favored such a scheme, for the brawl had taken place before the very door of the shanty where our young friend had his lodgings—of course he chanced to be somewhat familiar with the lay of the land, and speedily saw a way to draw the threatened one through a door against which he seemed to have pluckily taken his stand, just as they tell us Rhoderick Dhu did upon a certain famous occasion in his native Scotland, though it chanced to be a rock that rounded out his defense.

It took but a minute for Julian to scurry around into the house—no one appeared to pay the least attention to him, being wholly engrossed with the stirring little panorama that was taking place just beyond and which possessed all the elements calculated to charm the heart of tavern loungers.

The door was fastened with a rusty bolt, and had perhaps not been opened for a long time back, so that Julian found it no easy task to throw the bit of iron back and budge the woodwork, though finally muscular effort triumphed over obstinate elements, and he looked out upon the turbulent scene.

The squatty English sailor lad made a furious onslaught and, having staggered his big tormentor, retired again into his hole, which was nothing more nor less than the arch under the doorway.

Julian eagerly plucked him by the sleeve.

"Come in here, you," he exclaimed, and the boxer, who had turned, ready to do battle with some unexpected enemy in his rear, grinned with delight when the words met his ear—for it was getting night, and under the arched doorway one could not see with any degree of certainty, so that it must have been the clean-cut American way of speaking that gave him to understand that he had a friend at court.

"Aw, I'm not alone—will you look to the girl first?" he cried, still making extravagant

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demonstrations with his fists, as if to convince the enemy that his spirit was far from being cowed, and that it would be dangerous to rush in upon one so well versed in the art of self-defense.

This was something Julian had not counted on; but, poking his head out a little further, he detected what seemed to be an inert bundle crouched close by—a bundle that gave evidence of life as he reached out and took hold of it, so that in another second he found himself drawing a small edition of a golden-haired and blue-eyed doll through the gap, she struggling more or less and whispering shrilly to "Bobby" not to allow her to be kidnaped under his eyes.

The same Bobby had an eye to the main chance, for he also hastened to slip in through the narrow opening, after which he pushed the heavy door shut and could be heard fumbling for the lock which he seemed to divine must be there.

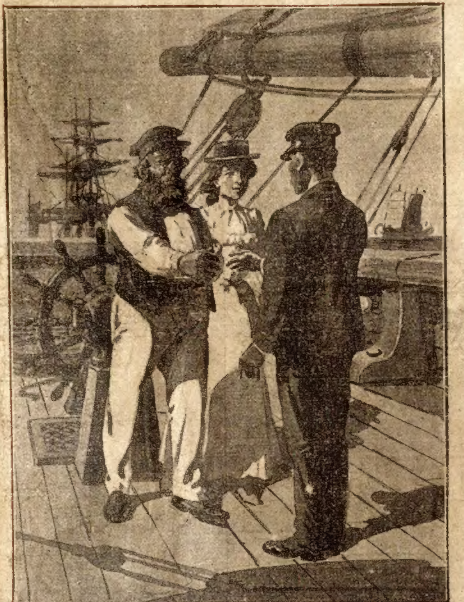
It was all done so mysteriously and with such an utter absence of fuss that no one in the crowd jostling each other outside seemed to understand how the object of their unwelcome attentions had vanished, though presently perhaps some of the most violent might try to search the house in the endeavor to locate the plucky sailor lad.

"Come with me—help her along, will you—she is afraid of me, I guess," was the way Julian addressed his newly-found acquaintance; but evidently the owner of the saucy blue eyes heard and resented the suspicion, for she immediately took hold of his arm and declared in no uncertain tone that she not only trusted him, but was ready to go where he said.

Now, as Julian had sisters at home, as a general thing he did not take much stock in girls, and looked upon them all as rank cowards, ready to scream at sight of a tiny house, so that this evidence of actual courage the part of a member of the despised sex ather startled him; but he made no reply, nly hurrying the twain along in the dark ntil they reached the rickety stairs by means which the upper loft could be gained, as was there his "sweat-box," as he facetiously lled his diminutive quarters, was located.

nce inside, he fastened the door after a thod of his own, by placing a piece of rd against the knob and securing the other d against a knot-hole in the flooring, after hich he heaved a sigh of relief, as if he had rown a heavy burden off his shoulders.

The blind at the window was shut, as he ready knew, so that he felt it was safe light the butt of a tallow candle which he pt on a box that served to also hold the tin ash basin; for somehow Julian was eager look upon the faces of those new friends hom he had been enabled to serve.



"It seems that I'm under obligation to ye, my lad."

CHAPTER II.

ON BOARD THE DINGY OLD BRIG.

Julian was not of a nature to take up with very fellow whom fortune might throw in his way; but there was something attractive to him in the humorous, good-natured countenance of Bob Kettles, and from the very start he seemed to be drawn toward the English lad.

Besides, he had seen the other stand his ground most valiantly against a chap almost twice his size, and Young America is always an admirer of grit, no matter where found.

The girl also interested him, she was such a dainty little body, pert in her way, yet apparently possessing an affectionate disposition toward those whom she looked upon as friends—she was pretty, too, and boys notice such things long before they begin to call themselves young men.

"I say," declared Bob, with his usual impetuosity, thrusting out his hand to this new-found friend, "this is a nice thing you've done for us, and we're awfully obliged, Tressie and I, ain't we, Tress?"

Whereupon the little one also thrust out a hand, as though she did not intend to let him monopolize the shaking business; and Julian smilingly complied with her request to ratify the new friendship.

"I don't know whether we're exactly safe here or not—some of those chaps seemed determined to jump on you, and I know they're a tough crowd. Suppose I go and listen at the top of the stairs—I'll only be gone a few minutes, and if it's all right you'll see me back again soon. If they make a move toward the stairs, we'll have to get out some back way—and it'll be hard, with a girl along, for there's some climbing to do."

"Don't worry about me—I've lived on board ship so long that I climb like a monkey—isn't it so, Bobby?" demanded the object of his anxiety, quickly.

Bobby said it was, and he said it in such an emphatic manner that the other lad could have no question concerning its truth.

When perhaps five minutes had passed Julian once more appeared, and from the look on his face the fugitives understood there was trouble.

"I'm afraid we must skip out of here. There's trouble down below—that big fellow suspects something, and he's urging a search of the upper rooms. The landlord tries to oppose such a thing, but I imagine he will have to give in pretty soon; and perhaps we'd better get ready to vamose the ranch. That old sinner seems to hate you well and good, Bob," he said, with the easy familiarity of youth.

The other chuckled and grinned.

"Oh, yes, he has cause to, eh, Tressie? You see his name is Pandy Crump—nice handle for a sailor, eh? He was a second mate on her father's vessel, and the toughest ever, so that he kept in hot water all the time, and Captain Baxter had to knock him down several times. He saw me laughing at him once and cursed me black and blue, so he's had it in for me ever since. Besides, Tressie is the daughter of the man he hates like poison, and that's the real secret of his jumping on us today. He wouldn't have dared if he hadn't been more than three knots over—half drunk, I mean. Now, if you're going to show us the way out, pitch in, my hearty."

"I'm going with you," remarked Julian, quietly.

"Hurrah!" exclaimed the other in his impetuous way, "good boy, you—awful glad to know you—let's be going, please."

Julian had not prowled about the interior of the sailors' boarding-house more or less for two weeks without learning of its character, so that in an emergency like the present he was able to utilize his knowledge to some advantage; accordingly he drew his new companions, for whom he had conceived such a sudden and strong liking, along a narrow passage, up another flight of stairs, this time consisting of but half a dozen steps, and finally arriving at the end of their journey when the corridor was closed by a wall, in which a small window opened somewhere.

Through this Julian thrust his head, and immediately announced that the coast seemed clear, which was doubtless very comforting intelligence to the hunted couple, for the gruff voice of their tormentor, Pandy Crump, came rolling along the twisting passage about this time, proving that they had not left the room a minute too soon, since the giant was ascending the stairs to carry out his design for revenge for fancied wrongs at the hands of Tressie's father, the sea captain.

Bob Kettles clambered up on the sill and was presently dangling outside, his feet resting on the lower roof of an extension.

"Help Tressie, comrade," he said, eagerly.

Julian waited not on ceremony, but picked the little girl up as though she were but a doll, and without much fuss managed to pass her out of the window into the waiting arms of her stalwart friend.

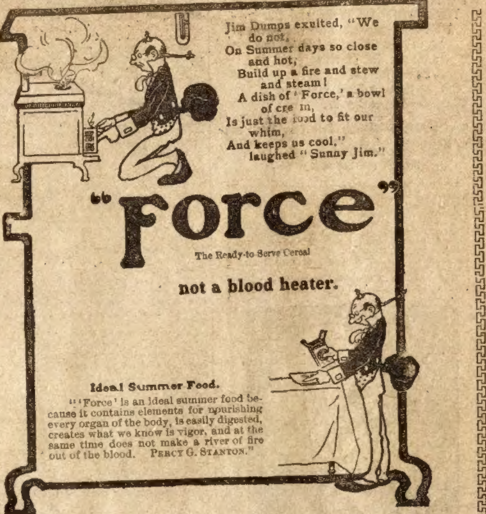
"Good—now you come along," urged Bob, in a whisper.

It was only play for so athletic a chap as Julian to get through the opening—he had done his share of hanging to icy yards during a gale, and knew what his muscles were made for; so that in a marvelously short space of time he, too, stood on the sloping roof of the kitchen, ready to make a descent.

Here again he took the lead, since knowledge was power, and they were not yet in a position of safety.

To reach the ground without attracting the attention of any one required considerable generalship, and Bob watched his movements with admiring eyes, feeling that he was in good hands.

This time it was Julian who dropped to the



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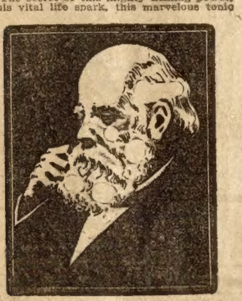

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ground when he had gained the corner for which he had been aiming, and then at his request Bob handed down the precious little package to him. Tressie allowed herself to be thus taken care of with a demureness that told very plainly she was accustomed to being waited on, and in the days to come Julian would find himself numbered among her most willing slaves, content to jump when the little despot but signified a wish.

Here again his knowledge of the surroundings stood them in good stead, for he was enabled to lead them through a gate into what seemed to be an alley. It was far from sweet-smelling, and the sounds of carousing welled out from various back doors of saloons; but they could shut their ears to these several things, being thankful that a way of escape had opened up.

Their pace was somewhat hastened when the singuarly gruff voice of their vindictive enemy, the second mate, came bellowing from the upper window, as he expressed his opinion that it might be possible for these he sought to have passed out that way.

When a couple of streets had been placed behind them and they were well away from the danger line, the three came to a halt, all of them panting from their exertions, yet feeling that they had won a decided victory.

Bobby was beaming like a newly-risen sun, for he could not forget how he had stood before his charge and given the half-drunken wretch numerous smart taps with his hard fists; and his feelings toward Mate Crump were of such a warm nature that this fact gave him exquisite satisfaction.

"Where do you want to go now?" asked Julian, just as though he had constituted himself a courier or guide and had taken the twain under his wing.

"Well, you see, comrade, we were heading for the place where we expected the boat of the Wanderer to meet us, but now it's hard to say how we're going to get aboard the brig."

Julian started at that last word.

"Is that your vessel anchored out beyond the cruiser—the one with such a funny blunt stem, he demanded, eagerly, as it flashed upon him that perhaps Fate had taken his fortunes in hand and meant to direct him in the way he had so long yearned to go.

"That's the illustrious 'Wanderer,' sure-pop, but you're wrong to poke fun at her shape—she sails like a tub and rocks a chap to sleep as if you're in a cradle. Besides, she has a history, that boat has, which some day I'll take pleasure telling you."

Why, he seemed to take it for granted that Julian was to be with him, and yet not a word had, as far as this was concerned, been spoken. It gave our young friend a warm feeling in the region of his heart to realize that there was even a chance of his seeing more of these two, whom he had met under such strange conditions.

"As to the boat, any other will do just as well, I guess, and I know where to get a fellow cheap," he said, confidently.

"But I haven't got a shilling by me—perhaps he'd wait for his pay till we boarded the ship?" admitted Bob, and thereby proving that he was a true sailor, for Jack spends his money with a prodigal hand and is nearly always in a chronic state of bankruptcy.

"That's all right—I can settle with the boatman," said Julian, carelessly, though he knew it would possibly take the last penny he had; still, youth is naturally of a buoyant turn of mind, and the future gave him little anxiety.

Flanked by such valiant protectors, the owner of the sunny blue eyes could not, of course, experience anything like alarm, and she hung upon their arms with a confiding simplicity that quite won Julian's heart, so that he even hoped he should see more of the young lady, which was rather an unusual turn of mind on his part, as he did not profess to give much thought to girls as a general thing.

Down in a corner of the quay, just beyond where streams of coolies were stringing to and fro, carrying burdens upon their backs or on the bamboo frame that nestled upon their willing shoulders, they found the waterman of whom Julian had spoken, an old acquaintance of his, and with whom he had held many conversations, airing his meager knowledge of Chinese, and doubtless content to explain much in vigorous pantomime.

Kwang Chow was not only willing to carry them out to the brig, but eager, for trade had not been any too lively of late.

His sampan was ready, and he hastened to usher the trio to seats under the little matting canopy that covered the end where passengers usually rested.

"Listen!" exclaimed Tressie at this moment.

All of them heard the rumble of a deep bass voice, growling like a caged lion, and it came from a point not far removed.

"I declare, he's gone and followed us here—will we ever shake the reptile off?" remarked Bobbie, in extreme astonishment, mingled with disgust.

"Rather he's come here on general principles, knowing that you were bound for the brig; but don't worry, for we'll laugh at him presently, when Kwang Chow gets started," and turning his batteries upon the "Heathen Chinee" he bombarded him unmercifully with a mixture of pigeon-English, a sort of language that seems to be fairly understood all over the world, being emphasized by various shrugs and gestures that carry a meaning not to be misunderstood.

Kwang pushed off, and the three passengers crouched under the matting, so that it must have taken very keen eyes to have detected their presence, and as to recognizing them, it was out of the question.

No doubt the tipsy mate saw the sampan heading out toward the cruiser, and he may have entertained some little suspicion concerning its freight; but even liquor and anger combined did not tempt him to pursue his investigations further, for fear lest the passenger prove to be some naval officer going on board, who would resent his impertinence by drastic means.

So they floated out upon the gently heaving tide and drew near the spot where the blunt-nosed brig swung to her cable.

Bob Kettles was full of spirits, and he insisted upon gravely shaking hands with his new-found chum in commemoration of their victory.

Even Tressie, in her way, was happy over the pleasant outcome of what had at one time promised to be an ugly affair, and she did not hesitate to state that she hoped the new boy would continue to make one of the company of the Wanderer—that she meant to speak a good word for him with her father, and he could consider it as settled, for while her father ruled the ship she had her own way with him; all of which amused our Julian not a little, and he found himself hoping the combination might be brought about, though this would have to depend pretty much upon the course which the Wanderer meant to take after she left Hong-Kong.

Finally they drew close to the dingy brig, which Julian surveyed furtively, as became one to whom it might prove a future home for coming weeks or even months. The tide was on the ebb and gurgled against that remarkable sturdy bow, running along the side with soft touches, as though caressing the grim old warrior that had laughed so long at the fury of the sea.

A man popped his head over the bulwarks and hailed.

"That's papa," announced Tressie, with a little cry of pleasure, and immediately waved her film of kerchief at the party above, announcing her arrival by a series of affectionate salutations.

The captain was apparently at a loss to understand why they came aboard in a native sampan instead of the ship's boat, which was waiting at the quay; and he expressed himself somewhat in this strain, being evidently a man given to forcible language; but the slip of a girl soothed him just as a mother might a rebellious child, Julian thought, and while the gruff old captain might continue to growl, he did so in a very low voice.

So they clambered aboard the brig, and our friend could not but think that Fate had taken him in tow, since his wish of the afternoon seemed in such a fair way of being realized.

Bob hung on to him, while the fairy took her papa in hand and her little tongue rattled away at a great rate. Julian knew he was the object of her discourse, and that she was lauding him to the skies; so that he felt considerable relief when Captain Baxter strode up to him with his big fist extended and his hairy face set in an amiable grin.

"It seems that I'm under obligations to ye, my lad, and if you're in need of a berth there's a place for such a likely chap aboard this same craft at as fair wages as any man pays," said the skipper, squeezing his hand.

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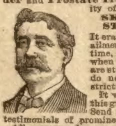

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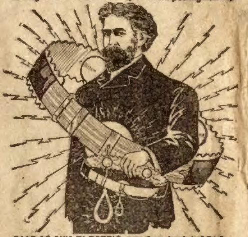

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Filthy Lucre.

(Continued from page seven.)

ter, I am so glad—so glad. I have tried to be brave through all these years of mourning for you, but I have been unhappy—very."

"And now we will be happy together," said Walter, again taking her in his arms.

It had been like a meeting of the dead, and the strangeness of it impressed all who were there that morning. In due time Percival Selkirk made Fanny Norton his wife and right regally she reigns in his aristocratic home, in which her mother and brother live with her, and where the loyal Mrs. Bedalia O'Flarrity fills a position of responsibility, the duties attaching to which are less laborious than was her former work.

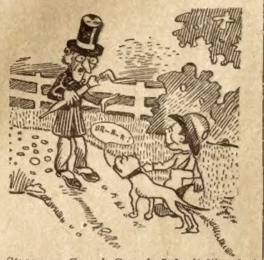
Selkirk was instrumental in breaking up the gang of ward heelers and political bums that Shellbarger had organized and long kept intact. He pursued official malefactors relentlessly and landed several of them in the penitentiary. He is hailed as a municipal reformer of the highest class and is likely at no distant day to be mayor of the great city of Chicago.

Bennie Norton is reading law under the guidance of his much-esteemed brother-in-law.

In many respects "The Cornucopia" is better managed than it was during the reign of Max Shellbarger. The employes are better paid and better treated. Ducey Damm is no longer connected with it. Maggie and Etta, thin and faded, still work every day in the "gents' furnishing goods department." Freddy Flitey and "Petsy" Ames married and set up in business for themselves as "beauty specialists." They are the inventors of "Pale Paint for Pink Pimples."

(The end.)

Stand-Off.



Stranger—Come! Come! I don't like that dog's looks, little boy.

The Kid—Well, he don't appear stuck on your looks, needer, boss.

Her Love.

She mourned when he was out of sight,
She loved him so;
She fondly told him day and night
She loved him so;
If other women gave him praise
She wished to tear them limb from limb;
She jealously watched all his ways
And made this earth a hell for him,
She loved him so.

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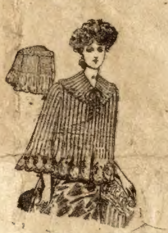
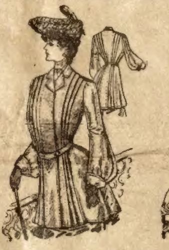
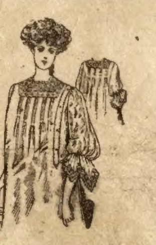
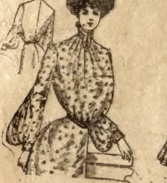
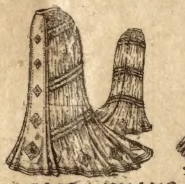
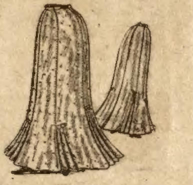

4448 COFFEE COAT 32-40 BUST.

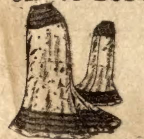

4444 TUCKED JACKET 32 40 BUST.

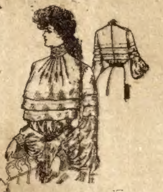

4447 NIGHT GOWN 32-40 BUST.

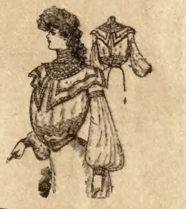

4471 PLAIN SHIRT WAIST 32-40 BUST.

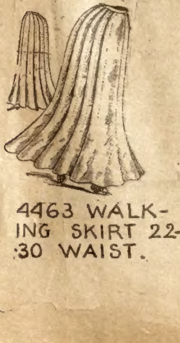

4445 WOMANS SKIRT 22-30 WAIST.

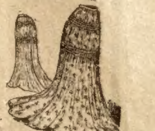

4457 WALKING SKIRT 22 30 WAIST.

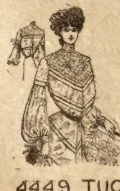

4452 CIRCULAR SKIRT 22-30 WAIST


4466 MISSES TUCKED BLOUSE 12-16 YRS.


4470 MISSES WAIST 12-16 YRS.


4463 WALKING SKIRT 22-30 WAIST.


4450 SHIRRED SKIRT 22-30 WAIST.


4449 TUCKED BLOUSE 32-40 BUST.

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FOR YOUTHFUL EYES

They Loved Longfellow.

The recent performance by Ojibways of a cantata based on Longfellow's "Hiawatha" revives the story of the affection that bound the poet to his Indian friends. Longfellow's special friend, from whom he heard the Indian stories, was Bukwujjinene. A few years ago the old chief planned to visit Boston and Cambridge, but just as he was ready to start he was taken ill.

When he realized that he was about to die, he called his nephew, Kabaoosa, and his grandson, Wabaunosa, and told them to go to the home of the poet, and invite Longfellow's daughters to visit the scenes on Lake Huron, which their father knew so well. The chief gave his kinsmen a formal invitation written with a hot iron on a square of birch bark. Translated into English, it ran:

"Ladies: We loved your father. His memory will always live in our hearts, and his kindness will never die. Will you be so kind, you and your husbands, as to come and visit us in our own country, and live with us in our tepees for a little while in the island of Hiawatha, in the land of the Ojibways, to see the remainder of the Indians with whom your father lived, and about whom he has written so beautifully, and to camp together as our parents did.

"KABAOOSA,
"WABAUNOSA."

In the moon of crusts on the snow.

The two Indians went to Cambridge, visited the Longfellow house and presented the invitation to Longfellow's daughters. They sat in the chair where the poet sat, and wrote with the pen he had used to write "Hiawatha." The ladies accepted the invitation, and visited the Ojibways that summer.

A Remarkable Monkey.

A woman tells of a monkey which she saw while in Paris, which was so well trained in good manners that it was almost impossible to believe that he did not understand what was said to him. The Japan Weekly Mail describes the animal's accomplishments:

When the woman met the monkey suddenly on the stairs one day, the creature stood in the corner to allow her to pass, and when she said "Good morning!" he took off his cap and bowed.

"Are you going away?" she asked. "Where is your passport?" Pulling off his cap, he took from the crown a paper, opened it, and showed it to her. When some one observed that her dress was dusty, the courteous monkey took a brush from the table, and carefully brushed her dress and then her shoes.

When any one gave him food he always made a low bow before taking it, and then ate it slowly and daintily. He had been taught to eat eggs with a spoon, and to use a knife and fork. He could lock and unlock a drawer, thread a needle, uncork a bottle, and polish his master's shoes. He seemed to take great pleasure in gay company, and paid close attention to the conversation, looking in turn at each speaker as if he understood what was said.

This remarkable monkey was never placed on exhibition. He died at an early age, of pneumonia.

The Boy and the Lady.

As the lady came down the street on a fine May morning, she heard a Baltimore oriole whistle. She hadn't heard one for a long, long time—and never in the city—so she stopped to listen. The oriole whistled again, plaintively and sweetly, then a boy came around the corner. It was a boy—a 10-year-old boy, with soft brown eyes and curly hair—not too clean, and a bit ragged.

"Was that you imitating the oriole?" said the pleased lady. "Do it again. I love to hear the oriole."

But the boy was shy, and got behind a telephone pole.

"Can you whistle like a Bob-White?" the lady asked. "Oh, do whistle like a Bob-White. I'll give you a dime if you'll whistle like a Bob-White. Where did you learn to imitate birds?"

Still the boy hid behind the telephone pole.

"Well, I must go, the lady said. "But I'll leave this dime on the curbstone, and I know that before I get very far away, you'll whistle like a Bob-White, won't you?"

The boy made no answer from behind the pole, and the lady walked on. Half-way down the block she heard another bird. It said, "Bob-white—Bob-white," high and clear. Of course, she stopped, and looked around. There at the corner was the boy, walking away from her. But he was looking back over his shoulder, and as long as she could see him, she heard the note, "Bob-white—Bob-white."

Little Boy Blue.

My little boy blue
He lost a shoe,
  And didn't know where to find it,
So he took a car,
And rode to a star,
  And found his shoe behind it!

One the Less.

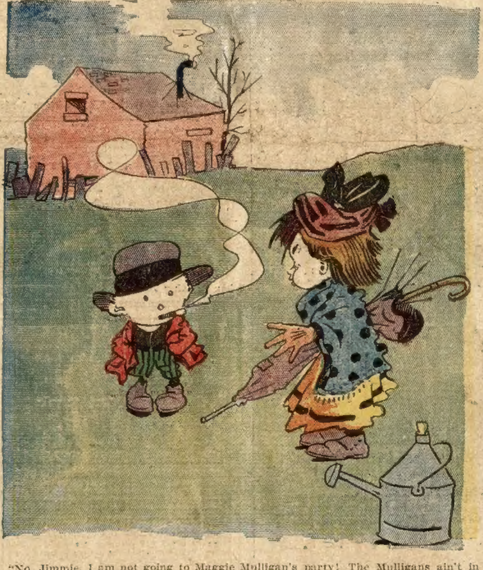
Sunday School Teacher—How many commandments are there, Willie?

Willie—Ten.

Sunday School Teacher—And suppose you were to break one of them?

Willie—Then there'd only be nine.

The man who drinks to drown his sorrows usually swamps himself also.



"No, Jimmie, I am not going to Maggie Mulligan's party! The Mulligans ain't in our set, an' I don't like Maggie, an' I've got nuthin' to wear, an' besides I ain't been invited, anyhow!"

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